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THOUGHTS FOR THE TIMES

By the same Author.

MUSIC AND MORALS.

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THOUGHTS FOR THE TIMES

BY THE

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WILLIAM FRANCIS COWPER-TEMPLE, M.P.

These Thoughts for the Times are Inscribed

WITH FEELINGS OF AFFECTIONATE REGARD

BY HIS FRIEND

HUGH REGINALD HAWEIS, M.A.

PREFACE.

THE present Volume consists of shorthand reports of several extempore sermons. Some of them, like the Introductory one, stand nearly verbatim as delivered; whilst others have been more or less modified.

In the case of sermons, most of which were preached without notes, whilst several were reported without a view to publication, it is impossible for me to say how much I have occasionally borrowed from other minds; but I can state roughly my obligations to the following works:—

To Mr. Froude's 'Plea for Freedom of Thought in the Church of England,' in the FIRST DISCOURSE.

To Mr. Herbert Spencer's Part I of 'First Principles,' in the SECOND DISCOURSE.

To Mr. Matthew Arnold's 'Literature and Dogma,' in the THIRD DISCOURSE.

To Mr. Lecky's 'Rationalism in Europe,' in the FOURTH DISCOURSE.

To Mr. Emanuel Deutsch's 'The Talmud,' in the FIFTH DISCOURSE.

To Dr. Hessey's 'Bampton Lectures on "Sunday,"' in the TENTH DISCOURSE.

In the Sermons on the 'Bible,' 'Preaching,' and 'Sacrifice,' I find I am much indebted to Mr. Ward Beecher on 'The Holy Scriptures,' 'Sphere of the Christian Ministry,' and 'Vicarious Sacrifice,' for some lines of thought, and an occasional illustration, marked *.

As unauthorised and incorrect versions of my sermons are reported without my leave, and published against my wishes, I take this opportunity of saying that I cannot be responsible for any statements contained in such reports.

I will only add, that if words that were originally addressed to the comparatively small circle of those whom I know and love should be found helpful to any others, I shall not regret the publication of these 'THOUGHTS FOR THE TIMES.'

HUGH REGINALD HAWEIS.

16 WELBECK STREET, 1872.

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I.

INTRODUCTORY.

ARGUMENT.

MANY causes conspire to prevent those who are dissatisfied with popular Theology from seeking reform, or advocating change.

Any attempt to modify Dogma is dreaded as an attack upon Truth —the difference between Dogma and Truth is then pointed out and illustrated, by referring to cases in connection with the Church and the Bible.

The present Thoughts do not aim at unsettling any one's opinions, they merely recognise existing doubts and difficulties, and are intended to throw some light upon them. The only safe guide in religious inquiry is the Love of Truth.

Any attempt to modify Belief is dreaded as an attack upon Faith. The difference between Belief and Faith is then pointed out by referring to cases in connection with Jesus Christ and the Reformers of past Ages.

The Theological Principles of the so-called Liberal or Broad Church Clergy are founded entirely upon the above distinctions between Dogma and Truth, Belief and Faith.

The position of a clergyman in the National Church is that of a member of a National Community. He has not only the interest of a professional man in his profession, but the interest of a citizen in a National Institution. As any citizen may give his opinion on any branch of State administration, or any professional man may express his views on the established dogmas of his profession; so, as a citizen and as a professional man, the clergyman ought to be allowed a similar freedom of speech.

The charge that the Liberal Clergy have no positive doctrine is then briefly denied—the following Thoughts supplying a further answer to that accusation.

First Discourse.

ON THE LIBERAL CLERGY.

DELIVERED JUNE 1871.

I SUPPOSE I should not be far wrong in assuming that there are three classes of persons in this church. A minority who are very well satisfied with the Church of England Service and orthodox theology; a large number who have no particular religious opinions, or who, if they do differ, lack the courage to differ openly from our established forms, and hardly care enough about religion to make a disturbance; and lastly, there perhaps are a few persons here (and looking around me I fancy they are not so few) who are casting about for some new ground of religion; who want to have a religious belief and cannot find one; who are not satisfied with our forms and ceremonies; who are convinced that there must be some forms and ceremonies—must be some theology that would meet their wants, although they do not like what they find.

Brethren, when a man wants to make his religion coincide with his convictions instead of following whatever religion he has been brought up in, however much it may be at variance with those convictions; when a man desires any kind of reform, whether it be in politics, or in the social system, or in religious faith, he is met with the same kind of opposition. The seeds of truth seem to be sown, but no sooner are they sown than a band of mailed warriors instantly starts up to oppose the progress of truth itself. If you and I belong to the number of those who are determined to have a reasonable belief, and who are determined to bring that belief into some practical harmony with our life, I say that we shall find a number of obstacles which will make it very inconvenient and uncomfortable for us to do so.

In the first place, there is Interest. There are such things as vested rights. Every reform of every kind is opposed by people whose interest it is to keep things as they are. Why is it that at this moment our Parliamentary Commissioners find it so very hard to re-distribute funds which have been accumulated under other circumstances, and which have for years been misapplied? Simply because a number of people have what they call vested rights. It is their private interest to prop up some of the grossest public abuses in the land.

Then there is Prejudice. We none of us exist without having some prejudices; but we should try and allow our prejudices to interfere as little as possible with the circulation of truth, and the honesty of our own conscience. Prejudice means the dislike of something

without a sufficient or ascertained cause for dislike—simply you have a prejudice against it. That prejudice may be founded on truth, or it may be founded on falsehood ; but in so far as it is prejudice it is founded on neither.

Then, again, there is Tradition. Some people have an immense reverence for tradition, and we ought all to have a reverence for it ; but we ought not to have such a reverence for it as to prevent us from seeing truth when tradition happens to be opposed to truth.

Then there is also the force of Example. Some people, as long as they are comfortable in their family or social circle, will adopt any prevalent opinions, for opinions are catching things, and the absence of opinion is still more catching.

Then, especially in religious matters, there is the Force of Association, and here I would speak most tenderly. People's associations may have grown up around a state of things which is passing away, the time comes perhaps when their religious convictions are suddenly rooted up, and a number of things, once implicitly held, are seen to be no longer tenable ; yet whilst entertaining serious doubts about the grounds of their own former faith, they cannot receive any new belief because their religious associations have grown up round the old ones. 'Father,' said Luther's wife, 'how is it that when we prayed to the Virgin our prayers were so warm and sincere, but now when we pray to God they are so cold and lifeless?' I was reading the other day of a missionary who found a poor old heathen in tears because he had

thoroughly lost faith in his old painted idol, yet could not say his prayers to God without it. Association kept him in the old paths.

But is a great cause to be ruined because some men must be sacrificed? There must be suffering—suffering of those who cannot be reformed as well as suffering of martyrdom by the Reformers. Is not sacrifice the mysterious law of existence as well as of all progress? When you see one brave soldier after another mounting the breach and being laid low whilst others pass over the piled-up bodies into the citadel, do you say, 'We will not have this victory—we will sacrifice nought for Freedom or for Faith?' No true soldier of liberty says that, no soldier of the Cross of Christ grudges the pain and ills which come either to himself or to his fellow-creatures in the righteous onward march of progress and of truth.

The difficulties, then, which come from old associations, as well as the other above-mentioned difficulties, deserve our sympathy, but not our acceptance. I know there are fears—sometimes well-founded fears—expressed, that when we seek to get rid of something once taken to be truth, now seen to be untruth, we should in fact be plucking up the wheat along with the tares; and people are apt to turn round and say, when we unsettle some received opinion, 'You are unsettling all truth when you thus sweep away the dogmas of the past.' Therefore, on the threshold, it is most important for us, if we are to proceed with any safety, to try and distinguish between *dogma* and *truth*. That distinction will

enable us to see what is chaff and what is wheat in past forms of religion; that distinction will help us above all others to illustrate the theological principles of the Liberal Clergy.

2. I have said in this pulpit some hard things against dogma; but don't think that I am ungrateful for dogma. Do not think that I am blind to what dogma has done for the world. Why, without dogma we could hardly get on at all. It is not dogma I quarrel with, but fixed dogma. It is not forms I quarrel with, but it is the setting up of certain forms which are supposed to be true for all times and ages. It is not theology I quarrel with, but that petrified form of theology which never alters, and which ignores the fact that although truth may be fixed and absolute, our appreciation of truth must be relative and progressive. That is what I object to; therefore distinguish in your minds between *dogma* and *truth*. There must be dogma. What is dogma? Why, it is doctrine crystallised. And what is doctrine? Simply the clearest statement of what you believe—that is your doctrine. The world has certain convictions from age to age, and it puts them into an almost legal clearness and amplitude of expression—that is doctrine. In the next age we may have to call the very same form of words or expression of doctrine by the ill-omened name of dogma. Yet in every department the world's progress has been carried on by that clear expression of doctrine ever becoming dogma—what is dogma now, is merely so much of truth as was clearly visible to a past age—but as time

goes on it becomes apparent that we have only expressed part of the truth, and perhaps that part has not been expressed rightly. Look, for instance, at the scientific dogma that the sun goes round the earth. That dogma expressed part of a visible fact—but it expressed even that wrongly. 'Something moved,' that was the truth. 'The sun moved round the earth,' that was the dogma; but when the nearer approach to the truth was made by the great astronomer, because he opposed the dogma his doctrine was rejected, and he was persecuted. And that has been the fate of all the great reformers—no sooner have they opposed a received form of truth in political, social, scientific, or religious matters than they have been anathematised or put to death.

Let me give you one more illustration of the difference between dogma and truth, which will bring out the folly of choosing dogma when you can get truth. Outside my garden there runs a rushing stream, and I tell my child, 'It is wrong for you to go outside the garden gate unattended; it is absolutely wrong for you to do so.' The dogma I place before my child is the dangerousness of the river. By-and-bye my child grows up, and people notice that he never goes outside the garden gate. When he is about twenty people say to him, 'You are a young man, why don't you go and see the world?' His answer is ever this—'Oh, because my father said I must not go outside the garden gate unattended; but if some one will go with me I will go.' The dogma was true for the child; the stream was dangerous to the child; but what would you say if a man were to carry

into advanced manhood his belief in such a partial expression of the truth? You would say that he was either a fool or a lunatic, and you would not be far wrong.

Now, brethren, there are dogmas ecclesiastical in the same way. There was the dogma of the supremacy of the Church of Rome. It has been often and truly said that, between 400 and 1200, the Roman Catholic Church was almost an unmixed blessing to the world, and the great thing which made it an unmixed blessing was just that bold belief and assertion that it had the best truth that man could possibly get; that it was practically infallible; that men walked in darkness without its counsel; that the priest ought to have the rule and direction of life. That was what gave the Roman Church power, and it insisted upon it; and it was quite right, because at that time the priests were the most educated portion of society,—as a class, the wisest and the best. As such they claimed to govern the people, and they did govern them. But when the Church found that the world was getting as wise as itself, and as religious as itself, it asserted that to be more true, which was daily becoming less true; the once true doctrine of ecclesiastical supremacy became an untrue dogma; it stiffened into an impudent and unfounded claim; and from that time forward the Roman Church began to lose power, because it had lost truth.

I will take another dogma. This time it shall be a Protestant dogma. At the time of the Reformation we were told that the Bible was infallible. In those days

historical criticism hardly existed; at all events, its methods were not generally accepted. In those days the nature of scientific truth was hardly understood. Under these circumstances the doctrinal assertion of Biblical infallibility could not do much harm, whilst it impressed people with a great sense of reverence for the Bible, in which they actually found so much good; nor was the doctrine—as it has since become—at all in violent collision with the popular heart and understanding, or at variance with the state of knowledge in that age. But now we have passed into a very different age, and if we value the Bible we do not value it for its infallibility, because it is seen to be clearly not infallible; that is not the nature of its value, that is not an element in its inspiration.

I have drawn elsewhere, at great length, the distinction between Inspiration and Infallibility, and whilst I have always maintained the inspiration of the Bible, I have shown that if you keep dogmatically to the infallibility of the Bible you are simply injuring the Bible by claiming for it what it does not possess, and what it never pretended to have or to be. We dismiss such dogmas as Ecclesiastical Supremacy or the Infallibility of the Bible without misgiving and without pain, because we thereby reach a higher level of truth, and therefore a higher level of life and nobler views of inspiration.

So, then, it is not formularies and ceremonies that we object to—we must have them—but we will not have them fixed for ever; they must be moulded by the wants

of every succeeding age. We do not mind dogmas, but we don't want inflexible dogmas. We don't mind theology, but we must not allow our theology to rough-ride conscience and exterminate religion. It may seem to some presumption to speak in these terms of theology and theological tenets which have been preached by a great many eminent clergy and bishops of the past; but how else can we speak in the present day, when our best thinking men outside the Church are simply smiling at the kind of things we call truth—simply smiling at what we pretend to believe, but what few sane men or educated persons outside the Church even profess any longer to hold?

Have we not a right to say that much of the old theology in this nineteenth century is no longer profitable doctrine, but mere dogma—that we want some new expression of truth, and that our narrow views and our conventional sermons and explanations are, in fact, exterminating religion, because they are keeping educated people out of our churches, driving the thoughtful and scientific world into opposition, and making enemies of those who should of all others be our friends? If the Church cannot utilise some of the best men of the age, the Church will go down; if the Church, which calls itself National, cannot use their enthusiasm, their learning, their love of truth, their philanthropy, and their goodness, except in connection with one shibboleth, so much the worse for the Church—the Church will have to go down. Those who under the garb of a spurious piety refuse to recognise facts—those who oppose themselves

to the voice of scientific, social, and religious progress, will find themselves ere long in a very poor minority.

You must have observed from the very beginning of my sermon that to-day I am not speaking to those who are satisfied, but to those who are dissatisfied. Were it otherwise, you might accuse me justly of unsettling people's minds; as it is, I address myself to those who are already unsettled. I shall do them no good unless I am able to take their doubts and give expression to their difficulties, with a view to showing, if I can, a way out of them. But this will only be done by making it clear that many of the forms they have received, and the beliefs they have treasured up, are not necessarily a part and parcel of that religious spirit which can never die.

3. Now, when I look for some light to guide me; when I see, not without anxiety, yet with a firm faith in the future, how the old things are passing away, whilst all things are becoming new; when I awake to the consciousness that we are in the midst of one of those great transition periods which came upon the world about the time of Christ, or again about the time of the Reformation, shall I not look anxiously for some steady principle of belief—some sure method of inquiry? What is that method? What is that principle? I answer this. The principle is the Love of Truth; and the only sane method of inquiry must be one which is founded upon that principle.

Therefore I beg you to notice that this morning I

have nothing to do with any particular doctrines. I have simply to point to the Love of Truth as a principle, and notice the methods of inquiry which are the direct consequences of it. You must be sure that your method is a sound method, and when you are quite sure of that, you need not be anxious about your belief; you will accept it as you accept any other consequence of wise thought and action; you will follow truth whithersoever it goeth, and each doctrine as it presents itself to you will have to be judged before the same equal tribunal.

But I hear some one say, 'Is there no such thing as faith? Are we not to receive certain truths in faith? Is there not one region for the intellect and another for the spirit—may we not lean upon God's promises where we cannot prove—may we not aspire where we cannot know? What becomes of faith when you speak of methods of inquiry, and oppose science to religion? Shall we set up our little puny reason against the great revelations of God?'

4. Brethren, our minds are surely confused when we venture to speak thus about Reason and Faith. We are mixing up things which have nothing to do with each other, or rather, which have certain points of contact, but which lie in altogether different planes. I pray you, once for all, to make one great distinction, in order that a great popular fallacy may be exploded. I pray you to distinguish between what you call FAITH and what you call BELIEF. They are two very different things. Faith is the instinct of trust in the Invisible—

moulding itself around a dozen beliefs and changes of belief—giving heat and motion to the cold mental process which has defined the object and nature of belief; —faith underlies all religions, and impels men to practise outwardly what they believe inwardly. The object of belief is not decided by any intuition; the object of belief is decided simply by the mind. When you have got an object of belief, faith or trust or self-abandonment to the divine instinct is ready to gather up and bring its wealth, and give it to the object you have decided it is right to worship. But belief is distinct from faith altogether. We don't seem to realise that, when we talk of faith being superior to reason; faith and reason are two different things. Our reason is given to us in order that we may determine what we ought to believe. But you may believe a thing, and yet may not have any faith in it. You may have an orthodox conviction about a dozen doctrines, but that conviction may not influence your life. Faith, the religious instinct, may never have laid hold of, or quickened your belief; the belief lies dead, being alone. Now let us try and understand, more closely if possible, the functions of the intellect and the functions of the religious sentiment, commonly called faith; and let us never be betrayed into talking such confused nonsense as we sometimes hear talked about setting up Reason against Faith, or Faith against Reason.

I am told, in the Acts of the Apostles, that Jesus said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.' I may have, and for myself I have, unbounded faith in that utterance.

I may say, 'Oh, yes! I know it is true, I feel when I spend myself, and am being spent for my fellow-creatures —when I am consulting the interest of others, and not my own—when I am thus generous and unselfish, I feel it is indeed more blessed to give than to receive. Of course it is true. It is my faith.' But did Christ say it? Did Christ say it? That is another question. You cannot determine that by any religious sentiment —by any amount of faith; it is simply a question for the intellect to decide. If you are satisfied about the authenticity and the correctness of the Acts, if you believe that record to be in all parts true, then you will believe that Christ said those words; but as far as your faith is concerned, it is no matter whether He said them or not—it is equally true and good whoever said it. I believe He did say it; but if you can prove to me that He did not say it, and show me that that part of the Acts of the Apostles was inserted in the third or fourth century, or even in more recent times, as any moderate scholar can show with reference to other passages in the Bible, then I say my belief is amended, because I always thought it was said by Christ, but now I know that, lovely and beautiful as it is, it is only said by some one speaking in the spirit of Christ, and as a matter of fact was not said by Christ. 'I say I believe it *was* said by Christ; but if you find out that it was not, and if you get your belief thus amended through your intellect, this is so much gained for truth, and nothing lost for faith. The Bible stands or falls upon these two principles. First, you have to show by an intellectual process pure and simple

—by examining the records, by seeing where the manuscripts came from before the Bible was printed, by collecting versions and working out the history of those ancient records—you have to decide which are right and which are wrong; but this process has nothing to do with religion, except so far as it is a religious duty to ascertain what is true. But secondly, when you come to the value of individual utterances of the Bible, you must try the spirits whether they be of God or no; you must try them by the test of their correspondence to your spiritual necessities—your moral nature, your religious aspirations, and your consciousness of what is right and wrong.

Remember this distinction between faith and belief. Don't be alarmed by the feeble and querulous cry which you hear constantly raised against bringing the mind to bear on religious problems. What are we to bring to bear upon them, I should like to know? The great thing is to have your intellect, or the intellect of those whom you trust in as guides, in harmony with your religious sentiments; but it is your intellect, or the intellect of those who are able to think and come to right conclusions for you—it is the intellect which is to provide you with the objects of your faith; and the clearer the intellect is, and the more free from error your conclusions are intellectually, the more true, unclouded, and beautiful will be the objects of your faith. I have such an opinion of faith, I do so believe in the principle of simple trust in God, that I am certain it can mould itself about almost any religious opinion—concerning God's nature

and His relations to man—however absurd. I am sure there are most pious Roman Catholics, most pious Unitarians, pious Mohammedans, pious Hindoos; and although I differ from these people in many cardinal points and innumerable points of detail, yet I see that they have faith, although this faith is moulded about what seems to me to be an imperfect and wrong series of intellectual positions or false facts. Separate belief and faith.

The great aim of all religious reformers has been just this, to bring the belief of their age into harmony with its faith—to get a correspondence between religious doctrine and religious life. Moses succeeded for a time, but the prophets improved upon Moses. Moses's theology had become in points out of date when the prophets began to speak. They had to give new readings of truth, to bring it into accord with the advanced religious sentiment of their age. Moses and the prophets passed away, and we get to the great Talmudical doctrines, embodying many a true and exalted sentiment. Christianity has made the world familiar with these, and has added the glory of a life whose power still fulfils without destroying, and whose energy still breathes a kind of spiritual life into many a dogmatic corpse. But Christianity itself is not a fixed term—so ready is it to change, so eager is it to assimilate with every new mode of life and character in every age. The Christianity of Christ is different from the Christianity of the Apostles; the Christianity of the Apostles was distinct from that of the Fathers. The scholastic Christianity differed

again from the patristic, and both differed considerably from the Reformation theology, and the Reformers differed among themselves, and our liberal Christianity is different from that of any of the Reformers. But each change has been an attempt to arrive at some more true expression of some phase of faith. Those who have not read this simple lesson of history have been much disturbed in mind at the various opinions around them: and in every age there have been those who insolently trample upon all that is new, and try to silence what they cannot understand; but there have been others upon whom the truth has flashed with the force of a new Revelation; and these men have been the lights shining in darkness—the apostles of progress and the heralds of civilisation.

I ask, what has the world done with such people? What has the world done with most of its victorious champions and saviours? Its greatest benefactors have been despised, rejected, and put to death. I look down the vista of ages, and the long procession comes towards me. I know them all—the old, the saintly; the familiar faces. SOCRATES, condemned to drink poison, because he told the young men of his day that their religion must not lean upon the myths and fables which had accumulated round the popular deities, but should depend rather upon that inward voice of conscience which every man would hear within him just in proportion as he had his spiritual sense developed by use. GALILEO, shut up, because scientifically he was in advance of the age. Where are the pioneers of civilisation?

Where are the prophets of thought? Where are the priests of science? Where are the reformers of faith? Their bones are rotting in unknown graves—their ashes are scattered to the winds. And time would fail me to tell of the Albigenses, the victims of St. Bartholomew's day, of PALISSY, of LUCILIO VANINI, of GIORDANO BRUNO; or turn to those great precursors of our English Reformation, JOHN HUSS and SAVONAROLA. Do you remember what the Bishop of Florence said to Savonarola, as he cast a brand upon his burning faggot? 'I cut you off from the Church militant!' 'Ay,' cried the heretic, 'but you cannot cut me off from the Church triumphant!' And yet one more figure rises before me—One whose head is filled with dew, and His locks with the drops of the night—One who spake as never man spake, and who came to seek and to save that which was lost. He placed His foot upon the serpent's head, and its fangs pierced Him. He went boldly in amongst the cruel wheels of a disordered world, and set them right, although He was torn to pieces in the act. Once more I hear the voice of One walking in the garden in the cool of the day; but that garden is not Eden, but Gethsemane. Once more the sweat of agony and the lone prayer, 'Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt.' Once more the cry of the rabble breaks the silence of the ages with a shout of blasphemy that makes us shudder—'Crucify Him! crucify Him!' and from the accursed tree comes the last wail of agony, 'My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?' It is the form of the Son of Man; He who put Himself into opposition

with the religious world of the period; He who was called a drunken man and a wine-bibber—a destroyer of the law, because He came to fulfil the law—a blasphemer against God, because He came out from God. That figure still stands for the deliverance of the ages—the figure of One without form or comeliness, whose visage was marred more than the sons of men, yet who 'by His faith and patience won for Himself the name of the Man of Sorrows, and the author and finisher of our faith.'

When I consider the ignorance and bigotry of past ages towards those who have come from God to this earth, blessing and to bless, my heart fails me; for I perceive that this age, like every other, is trying to stamp out the new forms of faith and of knowledge—is trying to silence the men who are rising up, and showing us the wonderful ways of God—men who have opened up for me and for thousands, views of the universe far nobler than ever I thought it possible for man to have. What shall we say to the children of this generation? Shall we turn in sorrow or n anger upon them, as Stephen turned upon the religious world of his day, and cry out in helpless despair and pain, 'Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost. As your fathers did, so do ye. Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted, and they have slain them which showed before of the coming of the Just One, of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers, who have received the law by the disposition of angels, and have not kept it.' or shall I look

upon this great city as upon another, though not a New, Jerusalem—this great and unbelieving city—unbelieving in the strictest sense of the word, because it has not known in this its day the things which belonged to its peace; and shall I exclaim, in words more august and more tender than Stephen's, 'O Jerusalem, Jerusalem! thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often'—by the voice of science, and the voice of a new and blessed knowledge, and by the many voices of advanced human experience—'how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathers her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!' God grant that the next words may not soon be thundered at the National Church of England: 'Behold, your house is left unto you desolate!'

Bear with me a few moments longer. I have unfolded to you the first principles of liberal theology, in distinguishing between dogma and truth. I have pointed to the methods of inquiry which must arise from accepting that distinction. I have shown the misery and disastrous injustice which has always and must always accompany the neglect of it. In conclusion, I will define my own position as one of the Liberal clergy in the National Church of England.

5. I am under the control of the State. All the clergy of the National Church are under the State, and therefore they ought to obey the State; but they find that their opinions are constantly coming into collision with the formulas which the State put forth for their

guidance at the time of the Reformation. How, then, can they as honest men go on working in an establishment from some of whose formulas they, in common with many of the most educated men in the country, dissent? That is the question I wish to place clearly before you. First, then, brethren, I must try, if I am ruled by the State, to understand the spirit as well as the letter of what the State means. At the time of the Reformation the State put forward a series of Articles and Formularies, which it required its ministers, and, in fact, all its members, to subscribe as members of the National Church. What was the meaning of that movement, prescribing a series of theological tenets and ceremonies? Men were at that time ready to cut each others' throats upon the opposing sides of Protestantism and Catholicism, and the State, in order to protect its subjects, put forward a series of formulas, which people of very different minds and opinions might agree in signing, in approving generally, and in giving their assent to, as a compromise. Now, when the State did that, it no doubt tried to get as near the truth as possible. The Articles were, perhaps, at the time as good and as moderate a statement as could be made of the Christian religion, considering the age of the world, and the social, political, and religious influences of that period. But do you mean to tell me that the State meant to fix these formulas as expressions of truth, beyond which there was no expression of truth possible? Why, that was the very point on which she had separated from Rome. Do you suppose that when the State

denied to the Church of Rome the power to fix dogmatic truth or ceremonies, she arrogated to herself the privilege of doing so simply because she found it necessary to put a good working set of formularies, to which her ministers and people were called upon to assent in the spirit of compromise? I don't believe it for a moment, and for this reason—because the very action of the State, in remodelling the forms of faith, was a protest against the fixedness of such forms. You may say, 'Aye, but it was an assertion of the fixedness of truth—an attempt to return to the old ways corrupted by Rome.'

Well, that was a laudable attempt, but it has accomplished even more than it attempted; for whilst the Reformation only swept away some tenets, and modified a few others, it was a practical admission that the mind of man must be brought to bear, from time to time, upon the subject-matter of his belief, as it is placed before him in his age and country, in order to purify and cleanse that belief, and prevent it from dying down into mere dogma. I can understand the Roman Catholics saying, 'We like dogma; we won't have our doctrines interfered with;' but in the mouth of a Protestant these words have no meaning. The very essence of Protestantism is that we have protested once, and that we mean to protest again. We claim our right to re-examine and to recommend reform whenever re-examination and reform are needed. The greatest re-examination of the truth was the promulgation of Christianity itself, and the greatest freethinkers were

the apostles. The reformation of Romanism was a trifle compared to the reform of Judaism by Christianity. Therefore I cannot believe that the State meant to fix for ever the expression of religious truth. But if the State meant to fix the doctrine and discipline of the Church, as from the rubric at the beginning of the Articles it might be argued (and such a design was, considering the prevailing state of knowledge and the heat of party feeling, quite pardonable), yet it would surely be unpardonable, nay, almost inconceivable, *now*, with the facts of history behind us, with the recent efforts of legislation before us, with the late authorised attempts to stretch and expand the formularies, with the mitigated form of subscription at length granted to the clergy, with the avowed intention on the part of the legislature to permit Dr. Pusey, Professor Jowett, Deans Stanley and Close to dwell together in the unity of the Faith—if not in the bond of peace. I say, with these facts, these ceremonies, these anomalies sanctioned and encouraged by the State of our days, so different from the State of past days, it would be cruel and unfair to assume that the State means for evermore to turn a deaf ear to the entreaties of no insignificant minority of her clergy and laity, when they ask her to lay aside as a worn-out vesture the 'non possumus' of Rome, and charge herself with the 'Resurgam' of a new Reformation.

'Well,' you reply, 'that may be all very true, but what business have you, under the present fixed order of things, to agitate for a reform however needful? you

are simply an officer of the State, and as long as the State maintains certain formulas you ought to maintain them.' Brethren, I have an interest also in the welfare of my Church and country just because I am the officer of a national institution. I am not merely in the position of the member of a club who does not happen to like the laws of his club; although, even in that case I might, through the club committee, agitate for a reform; but, as a clergyman of the Established Church of England, I have a national position independent of my position as a member of a Society.

Now you have often heard the argument flung at all who sigh for any reform in Church or State—'If you don't like the Church, leave the Church.' It is also an argument to which political reformers have been very freely treated of late—'If you want to have the ballot or manhood suffrage, or such-like plebian abominations, why don't you go to America, or some place where these institutions are encouraged?' But ought we to speak thus to citizens, to our fellow-countrymen, who have an interest in the soil, and a voice in the government of the country? Is it either generous or just? Ought we to address such language to the ministers of a Church which still boasts that it represents the national religion?

I, as a minister—if I were a member of any Christian sect outside the Church it would be otherwise—I ought to have a right to say my say just as much as people who are engaged in carrying on the government of the country have a right to protest against the abuses they

may discover, or think they discover.[1] Is any other professional man treated as the clergyman is treated? Do we say to the doctor, 'You must not investigate the truth about medicine, because you are a doctor?' It is because he is a doctor that he is entitled to do so. Would you say to the lawyer or the judge, 'You must not point out what is wrong in the law?' Why, the judges on the bench, when they find something in the law which is opposed to their sense of justice, say, 'I am sorry I cannot punish you more, but the law won't let me;' or, 'I am sorry I am obliged to punish you so much, but it is the law of the land. I register my protest, and I will agitate for a reform.' And any lawyer may publish a pamphlet, or make a speech, to show where he thinks the required alteration is needed. He may be wrong, but he is not punished for that. He may be mistaken, but he need not retire from his profession because he chooses to speak out. And had we lived in the days of rotten boroughs, we should have voted under protest; or, under the Test Acts, we should have kept our places under protest, and used our influence to bring about a change in the law. And that ought to be the present position of the Liberal clergy. Whether our liberty of teaching is abridged or not by the late decisions is still a

[1] 'The Prayer Book and the Thirty-nine Articles,' says Mr. Froude, in his 'Plea for the Free Discussion of Theological Difficulties,' 'so far as they are made obligatory by Act of Parliament, are as much laws as any other statute. They are a rule to conduct; it is not easy to see why they should be more—it is not easy to see why they should have been supposed to deprive clergymen of a right to their opinions, or to forbid discussion of their contents.'

matter of some dispute; but as that is the case, we have a right to claim the benefit of the doubt.

We may be told that our position is not like that of the lawyer who preaches reform, because the terms of his engagement do not bind him not to teach contrary to the law, but only not to act contrary to it. But our point is just this, that our ecclesiastical law cannot be reformed unless we be permitted to teach that reform is needful, and to point out where. We do not decline to use the Church's formularies or conform to the Church's discipline; we merely claim the liberty of saying that, as in past times both have been modified, so in future times both may be modified. If, then, we are engaged by any law not to teach this, that is the very point wherein such a law must be seen to be unjust above all other laws, and that would be the point for which we should claim a reform. We claim for the clergyman no more than that liberty which is enjoyed by every other professional man; no more, but no less. The reform in the law which we plead for is simply this, that it should not be illegal to say of the formularies which we are willing to 'assent to,' and the ceremonies which we are willing to use, that both might be improved; and further, to move for such improvement as we may or may not be able to compass, now or at any future time.

6. Lastly, we are told that Broad Church teaching is vague. When people are giving up old things, what is new may seem vague at first because the mind has not

mastered it. We hear that we have nothing to teach. It seems hardly worth while to meet so impudent an assertion. It would be more true, on the contrary, to say that the Liberal clergy have everything to teach which can be properly taught, because they are willing to teach everything about religion that can be properly known at all. But, standing in this pulpit for five years, I might well ask those who have been with me during the greater part of that time, and even those who have not been here before to-day,—Is there nothing to teach in the message we bring to you of an invisible God behind the universe, in whom we live and move and have our being, and with whom we can have sympathy and communion—so that all progress, social, scientific, and political, is a progress conducted under moral and interpenetrating religious influences? Is there no good teaching in the doctrine of communion between the Divine Spirit and men's hearts? Is there nothing in the Christ-life constantly held up before you in spirit and in truth? And do we not preach a real gospel when we insist upon the orderly development of the moral faculties, when we tell a man he has that within him which will respond to what is holy and true, if he brings his actions under the dominion of such feeble glimmer of conscience as he may possess? We have nothing to teach! We have everything to teach. A vast field of religious inquiry opens up before us, ever fresh, ever fertile, and full of heavenly blossoms. Into that field I now invite you to accompany me; and I pray that on the threshold we may cast away the fetters of bigotry and prejudice,

and walk as children of the light in the garden of the Lord.

If, then, forgetting for one moment our morbid horror of nicknames, we are asked, What is Rationalism? let us answer,—Rationalism is reverence for all that is true and good in the past, thankfulness for every advancement in knowledge, willing acceptance of all the new revelations of science, and a belief in the infinite possibilities of the human soul. In three words, Rationalism means infinite Sincerity, infinite Aspiration, and infinite Faith.

II.

GOD.

ARGUMENT.

ALL language fails to express, because all thought fails to contain, adequately the Idea of God.

The distinction is drawn between Thought and Consciousness, and it is shown by several examples that Consciousness transcends Thought.

The Unthinkable God is a subject of Consciousness. The confession of this Consciousness, common to both Science and Religion, provides us with a ground of reconciliation between the two; for both Science and Religion assume a consciousness of the Unknowable as an indispensable basis of thought.

But although God Positive can only be reached by indefinite consciousness, God Relative is fairly within the reach of Man's Thought as well as his Consciousness.

The Relative Nature of God is then inferred from so much of the Universe and Man as we can be said to know, and it is argued that what is seen and known as force in Matter, Mind, Love, must have affinity or correspondence with the Unknown God whom we seek.

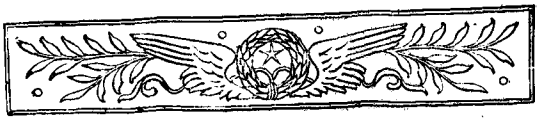
Thus God becomes relatively known to us, as Force revealed in Matter, Mind, Love.

The orderly growth and development through natural law of the moral nature, and of the religious sentiment in man, is not denied, but the reality of the Communion between God and Man is asserted and vindicated.

In the next discourse on the Science of God, much of the same ground is traversed from a different standpoint.

Popular Theology is declared to be unsatisfactory. The mind craves for scientific and moral foundations, however narrow as starting-points in the inquiry, 'What is God?'

The metaphysical basis has been discovered in our consciousness of the Unknowable. The scientific and moral bases are now pointed out in the discovery of a Stream of Tendency in the physical world, and a Power which makes for Righteousness in human society. Objections are then met. The Love of God is again inferred, and the possibility of a Divine Communion insisted upon.



Second Discourse.

ON THE IDEA OF GOD.

DELIVERED MAY 14, 1871.

GOD dwells in light unapproachable, or He is surrounded by clouds and darkness; His ways are in the sea, His paths are in the great waters, His footsteps are not known; He is the High and Holy One that inhabiteth Eternity, yet He is not far from any one of us. He is a consuming fire, He is a still small voice.

These are the kind of sentences in which man has from time to time tried to express his idea of God, yet the rush of thought and emotion ever weighs down his poor feeble brain, and all that is uttered sounds like the mere plaint of his own impotency; and often he finds himself hurried into violent contradictions, so that his description of God at one time cannot be made to agree with his description of Him at another; but he hardly cares to reconcile his expressions—he cannot reconcile them—he is dealing with some thought which baffles him, yet

which, he cannot, he dare not, stifle, for his brain is on fire and his heart is like a restless sea.

My brethren, what is the great question which is most interesting to the present sceptical age? Surely it is this—the existence of a living God. Surely it is this—the nature of that God! And this—the fact and the nature of the communion between that God and man. You cannot take up a book or pamphlet without finding the very first principles of Christianity and of all religion turned over and over again. And remember the popular literature is no bad guide to the popular taste; what is much questioned there, is doubtless much questioned by very large classes of men and women, not because the doubters are perverse, but because they are in earnest—because they are craving for some solid ground of faith, because they want to know what to believe before they can find courage to practise, although they have been told a thousand times that they must practise what little they do believe before they can learn to believe more. Nevertheless, there are many people who, unless they have a sort of speculative ground, a sort of theory about God and the universe, find it impossible to get on with their religious life, and it is the business of the moral teacher and of all thoughtful people to try to put the ever-varying ideas about God and about the relations between God and man into some theology in which a man's thought may rest, and which, for a time at least, shall provide him with a solid basis for moral action.

That is what I shall attempt to do to-day. By the

light of modern reflection I am going to try and place before you the fact of God's existence; then I shall explain, as far as I can, the nature of God in relation to man; and then I shall insist upon that most important fact—a communion between God and man. That is the sum and substance of what I mean by this phrase 'THE IDEA OF GOD.'

8. Now the very first thing I must ask you to realise is this, that consciousness is one thing, and that thought is another. Thought will go along with consciousness up to a certain point, and seem to be almost identical with it; but after every distinct thought has vanished, there may still be a consciousness left behind. Let us try and realise this. Thought cannot monopolise the sphere of consciousness; when you have done thinking, over and above all definite thought there may remain a consciousness which you cannot express in the terms of thought.

I will illustrate this. You know that space exists. You have an undeniable consciousness that space exists, but you cannot put the whole of this consciousness into thought. Every mode of description leaves something unexpressed. Let us try. Space is either limited or it is unlimited; but you cannot conceive of space as limited, that is to say, you cannot conceive a barrier being put down beyond which there shall be nothing, because beyond any conceivable barrier there must still be space; therefore you cannot conceive of space as limited. And you cannot conceive of space as unlimited. You may say it goes on for ever and ever. You think

you have a definite conception or thought there, but you have not. The instant you have stopped thinking, beyond your last 'ever' you mentally put down a barrier. Your mind refuses to entertain the conception of infinite space—it is unthinkable. You cannot conceive, then, that space is unlimited. Well, then, what do we arrive at, if you cannot conceive of space as limited nor unlimited, and yet you are conscious of space? Why, we arrive at this, that we have an undeniable consciousness about space which cannot be put into thought. You know that it is, that it must be one of two things, but you cannot think of it as being either. You have in short a consciousness, but your consciousness has outrun your thought.

Again, you have a certain consciousness concerning the existence of the universe, but you cannot put this into any intelligible terms of thought. It baffles you just as space baffled you. Let us try. This universe is either self-existent—it exists by itself—or else it is self-created, that is, it has created itself; or else some one created it—say God created it; but each one of these three propositions is unthinkable. You cannot imagine this universe as self-existent, because that is to imagine a thing which does not depend upon any antecedent cause; that is to say, self-existence implies the existence of something which has no beginning, and thought refuses to entertain that conception. Again, when you say this universe was self-created, you only get to another form of the same difficulty. Self-creation implies a potential universe passing into an actual universe,

and thought cannot conceive of such a thing as that. Thought cannot conceive of anything which has no existence suddenly becoming an actual existence; in other words creating itself; because, as we have just pointed out, you cannot conceive of a thing which has no beginning. Nor can you conceive of the universe as having been created by God. For even if you had established the existence of God, you would still have to establish that of matter. Is God identical with matter?—assume that He is—then how came matter? Did that which was not, make itself? Did that which *is*, become something out of nothing? The proposition is strictly unthinkable. But if you do away with matter, and talk of God as distinct from matter, the same difficulty arises, the inconceivability of imagining the beginning of God, or the creation of something out of nothing. So you see you cannot imagine or put into thought the existence of the universe as self-existent, or self-created, or God-created. But it does exist, or something we call the universe exists, and it must, as far as our thinking powers will reach, have come about in one of the three above-mentioned ways, each of which is unthinkable. Again consciousness has transcended thought.

Once more and lastly. God is conceived of in the mind as either existing somewhere, or everywhere, or nowhere. You may be a Theist, or a Pantheist, or an Atheist. When you speak of Atheism you mean the non-existence of God. But Atheism is inconceivable. You cannot look upon the orderly universe, and then deliberately say, 'Nothing has originated this, no living

principle, no orderly or intelligent principle has been at work here.' Therefore Atheism is inconceivable, because it involves the impossible idea of self-existence—the self-existence of the universe; but then Pantheism—the doctrine that God is everything and everything is God—and Theism, or the doctrine that God is somewhere, are as unthinkable as Atheism, for, as Mr. Herbert Spencer points out, whoever admits that Atheism is untenable, because it involves the impossible idea of self-existence, must perforce admit that Atheism, Theism and Pantheism, are all equally untenable, because they all involve the same impossible idea. Yet in thinking of God, it is impossible to avoid making the assumption of self-existence somewhere, and whether that assumption be made nakedly or under complicated disguises, it is equally vicious, equally unthinkable.

Thus the consciousness of God transcends thought—transcends the sphere of definable knowledge—though not the sphere of experience. You have a consciousness which enables you to say there must be something which we cannot by thinking find out behind the Universe—there is an omnipresent, incomprehensible power, as it were, at the back of all these outward phenomena, that, for want of some better word, I will call God, and when I say there must be, I mean that I have a consciousness that there is. Something which I choose to call God exists, but He is unthinkable.

Once again consciousness has outrun thought.

9. Now then I have reached an important point. It is

none other than this—the reconciliation between Science and Religion; it is to be found in this one fact, which is common to both of them—the confession upon purely intellectual grounds of a force or power incomprehensible and omnipresent (we call it omnipresent because we cannot mentally assign to it any limits; we call it incomprehensible because it cannot be comprehended by any forms of thought)—the existence of such a power is a fact which science confesses, and it is also a fact which religion confesses. There then is an impregnable ground upon which you may build the religious consciousness. It is not only a matter of sentiment, although it is that, but science also confesses it—that is to say, the existence of this omnipresent and incomprehensible power is a matter of knowledge; and you may be sure that science will never destroy that fundamental ground, without which it cannot move one step.

Hold this conclusion fast, I beseech you, and don't think that these speculations are vain and idle: a reconciliation between the principles of science and religion is no vain thing, for are we not constantly told that the tendency of science is to destroy religion? I tell you science can never destroy religion, because when they are pushed to their extreme limits, both science and religion confess the fundamental fact on which each stands, both postulate the same hypothesis of a reality underlying all phenomena. Viewed scientifically religion is impregnable, but as Mr. H. Spencer points out historically it is equally so, for 'the Universality of Religious ideas, their independent evolution among different

primitive races, and their great vitality unite in showing that their source must be deep-seated instead of superficial' ('First Principles,' p. 14.) But concerning religious history, we shall have more to say elsewhere.

Distinguish now between the spheres of science and religion. Science deals with phenomenal facts, or the relations which exist between various phenomena; but it does not deal with the essence of these phenomena. When science has explained as it will explain more and more of this world, there will yet have to come the explanation of the last explanation, the mystery of all life, that which makes it what it is and not otherwise; and that is what will never be explained, for it lies outside the limits of thought, and that is a confession common to both science and religion.

We have then, by the light common to Religion and Science, established the existence of God.

We arrive at this not by thought, but by a consciousness transcending thought. It is the existence of this consciousness which enables us to come nigh to God—to understand God with an intelligence beyond that of definite thought. If thought is the organ of religious knowledge, then, as we have abundantly shown, as Dr. Mansel has abundantly proved, we can know nothing of God. If thought is necessarily co-extensive with consciousness, we can know nothing of God.

Accept Dean Mansel's premises, and you must accept his conclusion—you must base religion, not upon human science, nor upon human consciousness, but you must take the theology offered you as revealed, because you

cannot have any consciousness of your own about God. Dr. Mansel observes, 'The Absolute and the Infinite are names not indicating an object of thought or consciousness (*sic*) at all, but the mere absence of conditions under which consciousness is possible. What can be known only as a negative naturally cannot be affirmed to exist, hence God cannot (revelation apart) be affirmed to exist.' That in a nutshell is Dr. Mansel's argument; and as Mr. H. Spencer points out, if the premiss is granted, the inference follows: but he goes on to show that the premiss is not strictly true, there remains a qualification which saves us from the scepticism otherwise necessitated by accepting Dean Mansel's argument. 'It is not to be denied that so long as we confine ourselves to the purely logical aspect of the question, the propositions quoted above must be accepted in their entirety; but when we contemplate its more general or psychological aspect, we find that these propositions (about the Infinite and the Absolute as equally outside thought and consciousness) are imperfect statements of the truth, omitting or rather excluding as they do an all-important fact. To speak specifically: besides that definite consciousness of which logic formulates the laws, there is also an indefinite consciousness, which cannot be formulated; besides complete thoughts, and thoughts which, though incomplete, admit of completion, there are thoughts which it is impossible to complete, and yet which are still real in the sense that they are normal affections of the intellect.' Of such a kind are the thoughts of man about the Infinite God,

which I have preferred to designate consciousnesses rather than thoughts.

10. Now, brethren, I hope you will lend me your attention one step further in this branch of my argument. You try and conceive of this God, this Creator, this Invisible Spirit—call it what you will, conceive of Him in His totality, and He is utterly beyond the reach of definite thought though not beyond consciousness; but conceive of Him in certain relations with ourselves, and He is at once brought within the reach of definite thought as well as consciousness. God in relation to man is conceived of as Power wielded by Intellect and Will; but it is quite possible there may be an existence as much transcending the conditions of intellect and will, as intellect and will transcend mechanical motion. It is no doubt beyond experience, but it is quite possible that such an existence may be the existence of God in His totality. Thus this intellect and will through which we think we know God, may be only a small part of that great whole which is called God in His totality. What I wish to point to is this—a distinction between the partial nature of God revealed to man in the Universe, especially in human nature, and the whole nature of God beyond man's ken. This is a most important distinction, because it enables us to relegate to the sphere of the infinite totality of God a number of anomalies, inconsistencies, and injustices which we cannot explain when we contemplate God as alone He can be intellectually contemplated: viz., God as He exists in relation

to us, as contrasted with God as He exists in His unknown totality.

For instance, the universe abounds in strange mysteries. If we try to think with the intellect of man, guided by the moral sense, why this thing goes wrong, why this cruelty is permitted, why the young and gifted are taken from us, why we when innocent are called upon to suffer all kinds of misery, not only is it difficult to assume that God loves man, it is even hard to suppose that His intelligence is always active, so blundering and blind and mechanical does nature sometimes appear to be. For instance, the laws of disease are philosophically as subtle and beautiful as the laws of health; but is the law which provides an artificial covering to protect the formation of an internal calculus in the human body as wise, as loving, a law as that which constantly purifies the bad blood by a fresh supply of oxygen? In the last case we exclaim, 'Behold a beneficent Creator!' in the first, 'Behold a blind Law!' but with the doctrine of God's totality in full view, we are at liberty to assume that there may be beyond, something which will reconcile all these things, so that God is seen to act in relation to us harshly, His laws sometimes working blindly and cruelly for the individual, whilst for the whole of nature and the ultimate destinies even of the individual man all is well.

Let me give you an illustration. A member of Parliament is one man in relation to his constituents—the people who have sent him to parliament; he is another man with reference to his country, and it may be very

possible that what would be pleasing and agreeable to his constituency may not be for the good of his country. As he sits in parliament, he may vote for a tax which will fall very heavily upon his constituents, and yet very lightly upon the country at large, and his constituency will then abuse him as an unprofitable representative, because he has voted for something which seems bad for them, although it happened to be good for the country. As a member of parliament he belongs to a corporation, and he is acting with a representative corporation; acting in his totality, in his larger corporate capacity, his ways are inscrutable to small-minded provincialists; but all is well done, he is of necessity one thing with reference to the constituency, and another to the country.

We are God's provincialists in the great country of the universe. Cannot you imagine roughly that God may be dealing with the world and with individuals in some such way as this; and that it would clear up a great many of the cruelties of the world, if we knew what the Divine purpose was in its totality? I believe that God must constantly act for the present with reference to the individual harshly, but that we are parts of some scheme of infinite dimensions, parts of a scheme of infinite duration, of infinite development; and that if we could see the whole, we should see how the cruelties we complain of, the apparent inconsistencies, contradictions, wastings, failures, discords, could be harmonised by a knowledge of the great whole to be worked out by the Divine energy. That is a thought I wish to insist upon. God, in His totality, is incomprehensible.

11. But now let us draw near to this God, and try and construct Him for our minds, as He is in relation to ourselves. Is it unfair in trying to discover what God is,—the limited God as opposed to the illimitable God, in relation to man,—is it unfair to look at the world about us and say, 'I will reason from what I see here, from what I know of the universe and of man to the relative nature and constitution of God?' I will reason in this way, because, whatever exists now actively must have had an appropriate origin—the source from whence it flows must have impressed upon it its own law, so that if I find certain qualities in the world I may reason to a power or source from whence those qualities flow; or at least I may say, that Reality which both science and religion agree in declaring to underlie the phenomena displayed in the world and in human nature must be something similar in character to the phenomena themselves, or it would not have given rise to them as appearances or manifestations of itself. Surely that is no outrageous proposition, but one most reasonable and satisfactory, for it puts within a man's grasp the very detail and particulars of God's nature.

What do I see in myself and the world? First, materiality, or at least force under conditions called by the senses 'material;' therefore, I say there must be something analogous to an element of materiality in God, or a point of contact between materiality and God. There must be a certain relation between the Divine Being and the principle of matter of which the visible universe is composed. You will anticipate the next step.

I now discern a primal intelligence manifested in what I call laws, or orderly sequences. I see laws in my own nature, I see laws of body and of mind; our minds are constituted so as to perceive all this, therefore I infer that the laws and the intelligence which perceives them must have come from some intelligent source. But, leaving man entirely out of the question, I can see an immense and incomprehensible intelligence displayed in the growth and development of the universe, and I therefore infer that there is intelligence, or some vast force analogous to intelligence, in God. So that I get two Divine qualities from observing the universe and man; I arrive at something analogous to matter and something analogous to mind, or I am able to say that in God there are forces arranged under conditions which we call matter; and, combined with matter, forces arranged under conditions which we call mind.

But are we nothing but flesh and blood and bones, or, at best, animated calculating machines? In human nature there is still a residuum to be dealt with—a residuum intimately connected with and yet distinct from matter. There are impulses and emotions, there are powers of self-sacrifice, and powers of discerning good and evil; there are, in short, a number of properties belonging to the affectional life of man; his religious feelings, his moral sentiments, his aspirations, and the motive power which lies at the root of these; accordingly, from what I find in man, I again reason to God, and I infer that in Him, too, there is something analogous to love. That He, too, feels some vast joy in the joy of His creatures,

and some deep 'painless sympathy with pain.' Thus I seem to reach a sympathetic element in God's nature.

12. Now I come to a point where grave questions arise. Modern science has told us that we cannot thus argue from the love in man to anything corresponding to that in God. Modern philosophy says the sentiments of conscience, the moral law, are not inspirations; simply matters of natural development. They have arisen step by step, they did not exist formerly in man; they have slowly grown up by the pressure of experience evolving a moral nature in man. Let me analyse the way in which this is said to have been brought about. Primeval man, we will say, was at first without any sentiments of right, wrong, truth, justice, etc.; there was a great struggle for bare existence, and the natural instincts were very strong for the maintenance of life. Therefore, if one man saw another who had food and drink, he would naturally go and deprive him of his food and drink. At first there would be no control, no mastery of the appetite; where one got hold of what another had he would take it all, when he might have divided it and still had enough. The weaker companion would be often killed in this struggle. The struggle would end in the survival of the fittest, that is, the strongest. Nevertheless it might well happen as time went on that some one so killed was valuable to society, and the rest would soon learn on utilitarian principles to punish anyone taking away the life of one valuable to the community; and thus you would have a reflex feeling generated, for if occasion

arose for you to kill anybody, you would remember the consequences. You would restrain yourself, and hence would come to you the habit of restraining yourselves, and the habit of respecting your fellow-creatures, and this incipient and utilitarian kindness would ripen into benevolence, and willing self-sacrifice would not be long in following. Such is the explanation of modern science, and moral law turns out after all to be only a system of checks and counter checks, nothing but that; the affections have been evolved by civilisation out of brute instincts, and the moral sentiments of self-sacrifice, disinterestedness, and such like, only came from imperative habit and motives which have been the results of what we may call the agglutinated experiences of mankind, as regards what was likely to promote the greatest happiness of the greatest number. That is the scientific theory of the moral sentiments. This may or may not be the right explanation of the moral sentiments; but, suppose it is the right one, suppose moral ideas are human experiences, slowly accumulated and organised. Suppose you can trace the order and development of the moral ideas; nay, suppose you can explain the religious passion itself as the work of the imagination projecting its sentiment into the external world, and thus making a God. You have not answered the question whence—whence the power which has constituted society on this self-preserving, this moral basis; and especially, whence the sentiment which has created your God? Simply because you see, or think you see, the way in which things have been developed, and you can trace

the growth of each, step by step—do you therefore deny that power which has thus ever directed each after his kind, and constituted the world in one way and not in another?

Here is a forest. You bring me an acorn: if you cut it in two you will see the little germ from which by-and-bye will come the oak, when planted in the earth, and nourished by the influences of nature. You can explain the causes which end by producing this forest of oaks. Then you say, 'I see it all; this forest of oaks came from these acorns.' You have only got over one difficulty. The oak came from the acorn, but where did the acorn come from? where did the principle of life in the acorn come from? I see and wonder at the great arboreal group of moral sentiments. You show me the seed. You say, 'All this has been the necessary consequence of certain things which went before.' What do you mean by necessary consequences? You mean a certain apparently invariable order or succession of phenomena, which you call a system of laws by which certain things are developed out of certain others. You then come to ask who made these laws, where did they come from, why that fixed order of development and no other—why not chaos? That original law, that stream of tendency is none other than the underlying Reality—is none other than God, in whom we live and move and have our being, and in whom must lie the conceptional germs not only of force as apparent in matter, but also Intelligence, Will and those other perceptions of human nature called Love and the Moral Sentiments.

13. Now, if we have established things so far, can you stop there? If you believe that there is sympathy in God with what we call love and moral law in man, can you stop short and say, 'But God does not communicate with man'? Will you confront with calm denial the whole experience of the world—the conviction most instinctive, most indispensable, most dear to human beings? A consciousness rather than an intelligence that God is in communication with the human spirit? As of old, men crave for signs and wonders. They think they would believe if occasionally one rose from the dead. But what would be the use of that? If a flaming spirit descended at this moment into this church bearing a revelation from the Invisible; don't you think we should have fifty explanations of the occurrence ready by to-morrow morning, and a facetious article upon the subject in the next *Saturday Review*? Is there one medical man present who, in spite of his own senses, would not be prepared to maintain the hallucination theory rather than the supernatural theory? But persistent consciousness of Divine communion, the consciousness of ages, substantially identical with our own consciousness, is less easy to tamper with; the spirit of sons, crying, Abba, Father, is less easy to silence. This is the consciousness which is more than a feeling, and above a knowledge! I see before me stretching away down the dim vistas of time, ranges of temples thronged with worshippers. These countless fanes were raised to this known yet unknown God. Sacrifices and prayers have been offered to him in heathen groves, in Indian forests,

upon Gentile mountains, in Jewish synagogues, and in all lands. See how, from the early dawn of history, there has been an innumerable multitude bowing down in prayer because they have this consciousness and need in them of God realised, this ineradicable desire to meet Him, this conviction that He was to be met with. Yes, my brethren, underlying the grossest idolatries I find this permanent passion, this lonely cry, this imperishable faith. Even now, this very congregation before me bears witness to the impossibility of exterminating the sentiment and crushing out our permanent instinct in this most corrupt and immoral city, in this most civilised but sceptical age. You are still here by virtue of your belief that God can be communicated with, and that you are in some sort communicating with Him this day.

But withdraw your thoughts if you can from the multitude. Look at the central religious reformers of the world. Suppose your own feeble glimmer of religious sensibility is but a false and fugitive 'ignis fatuus.' Do you believe that the saints, the apostles, the martyrs, were all taken in, that all their experience was imagination, that they were all the time merely bowing down to some moral sentiment created by themselves, in the teeth of lust, avarice, and violence, a sentiment corresponding to no divine Reality, with no other ground than the shifting and baseless fabric of a dream?

Look at Luther breaking away from the prejudices of his early youth—Luther, who might have been an illustrious Roman doctor, a wealthy and popular ecclesiastic, perhaps the most admired, the most popular man in

Europe. Behold him breaking away for truth and conscience sake, because he had the pure conviction that he was supported in the path of duty by a communion with his God. See him as he stands before the powerful ones of the earth, defying them and living a life of martyrdom in this world, because he was supported by this same feeling of communion, this justification which he had by Faith, this strong and righteous sense of soul-allegiance to the Most High. Do you think it was a fancy which induced Paul to relinquish the brilliant career before him for one of constant trial and persecution? Paul, who might have been a brilliant ornament to the society in which he had been brought up, throwing over all his early friends and associations, lifted up by the same sense of Divine communion. What enthusiasm has cheered on those solitary wanderers who have borne the seeds of truth across tempestuous oceans and untravelled continents? Who was with them in the darkness? Who was by their side in the lonely forest? Who supported them when they were led to the stake for conscience sake? Whose arms were about them when the savage hatchet clave their temples, and their blood was poured out upon the lone sea-shore? All, all were the victims of their own delusion. Though calm their lives—though wise their counsels, though pure their deeds, all, all were deceived. They had no Father in heaven; there was no God, no Comforter. And Jesus Christ, too, brethren. Say you He was a mere dreamer? No Son of God at all? None heard Him when He prayed, 'Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit.' No angel from heaven

comforted Him. Was he a forsaken man, speaking wild words into the midnight air; was His whole life nothing but that of a deluded enthusiast? or was He indeed thrilled through and through with the Divine life to be what He came forth from God to be, to accomplish what he did, and to drink to the dregs 'the cup which the Father had given him'? The most transcendent facts of history, the lives of all prophets, of all religious reformers, of all devout worshippers, the mission-work of the Jewish nation, the revelation of Jesus Christ, and all the religions of the East, and the West, and the North, and the South, are without explanation if you deny the God-consciousness in humanity, and the God-communion with man.

But why need I dwell upon the past when I look around me, upon this crowded assembly, upon you, my brethren, who have this morning listened with such marked attention to a discourse which cannot have been very easy to follow? I ask, what does this concourse mean? Why are these people here? Why are others crowding into churches and chapels this day all over the land? Because the services are conducted in so excellent a manner? Because the churches are so handsomely decorated that they have a tendency to draw people in to look at them? Is that the reason why people go to church? Because they have never heard a word against religion in any of its forms? Because the ground of their faith has never been questioned? Because the air is not impregnated with Atheism and with forms of belief which qualify each other until

nothing is left? Is that why? No; that is not why. It is because they cannot get out of their minds, although all the influences of the world are against them, though many impulses of their own hearts are against them, and the flesh and the devil are against them, and some, even of the foremost intellects of our time, cast doubts upon the possibility of a rational religion at all—yet they cannot get out of their minds this exalted and adorable superstition that God is in the midst of His people, about their beds and about their path, spying out all their ways,—coming to us in our youth and health and in the exuberance of our physical life, coming to us in the paralysis of tribulation, a ready help in time of trouble, wiping away our tears and binding up the broken-hearted, and doing for us exceeding abundantly above all that we can ask or think, for His great love where-with He has loved us!

O living will, that shalt endure
When all that seems shall suffer shock,
Rise in the spiritual rock,
Flow through our deeds and make them pure

That we may raise from out of dust
A voice as unto him that hears
A cry above the conquered years
To one that with us works, and trust,

By Faith that comes of self-control,
The truths that never can be proved
Until we close with all we loved,
And all we flow from, soul in soul.

ON THE SCIENCE OF GOD.

DELIVERED JULY 16, 1871.

I TRUST that you are not unwilling to return with me to the contemplation of the nature and character of God. It is a subject of never-failing and of all-absorbing interest. Deep answers unto deep. The soul is ever seeking anxiously for God, if haply it may find Him. The eyes of the spirit strain into the deepening gloom, the heart pines for a glimpse of the King in His beauty, for the light that is behind the cloud—the light that is shining in the darkness, and which the darkness comprehendeth not. We are like travellers who, seeing some lofty beacon in the night, advance towards it, but the mist rises and the winds blow, and the tempest beats in our faces and confounds us, and the clouds gather thick about the bright star on the distant summit, and all is dark; but as a stormy gust sweeps the sky clear, again we see the light, and press forwards. Once more it is

hid—surely it has been blown out, and we sit down hopeless—when in the very moment of despair it bursts forth again, and scatters the night. So it is with God and the soul. Athwart the mists and fogs of ages men have been looking on to Him. Athwart the roar and darkness of a world confused with sin men have been looking on to Him. Athwart the despair of the heart, the outward trouble of life, the pain and cruelty of life, men have been looking on to Him. And still He is seen to shine more brightly as the heart is more pure, and as the mind is more clear, and the ways of the soul more in conformity with the divine, unchangeable laws of the spiritual life. Yes, it is the understanding of spiritual laws, the deep perceptions of love, the life of the heart, the recognition of the soul's wealth and the soul's desire, the sympathy with human experience,—these things make God possible, and reveal His nature to man—not the teachings of dogmatic theology—not arguments founded on texts, nor the decrees of church councils. In such temples made with hands He dwells not. He is the great open Secret.

15. Nothing so perplexes the mind of the ordinary layman as the astounding and exclusive familiarity which the clergy and writers on dogmatic theology profess with reference to the character of God and His dealings with mankind. They speak of Him as if they had seen Him lately in the flesh, as if they had been chronicling all His movements for some time, as if, in short, He was some one living in the next street. They undertake to

clear your poor head of all doubts and difficulties. They insist upon your adopting their arguments, which to you seem no arguments at all, and swallowing their explanations which explain nothing. What you want is a foundation. They can dispense with that. They can build in the air. So at one time we are told confidently about an arrangement made between the Father and the Son, whereby a certain price was to be paid for the sin of mankind, and mankind rescued, how from the devil, or from the heavenly Father, or from sin, or from an offended law. A forensic transaction of some kind has taken place between the Father and Son. The crucifixion of Christ has satisfied the wrath of God against sin, or has satisfied the majesty of offended law. It is sometimes difficult to understand what has been satisfied, nor is it easy for an average mind to perceive how, if it is sin against the law to pardon the guilty, it should be no sin at all against the law to inflict arbitrary suffering on the innocent. It has been thought by some that to add such an infliction to the remission of a penalty is to double the transgression against the majesty of offended law, not to cancel it. But such objections do not much trouble professional theologians, who reply that God's ways are not our ways, nor are His thoughts our thoughts.

Again, we are told of the tender and infinite love of God. Indeed, how loving are His ways! He appears according to some to have predestined a certain number of people to misery, and others to happiness; therefore we can repose in His love, and may be perfectly comfortable, if we are not perfectly horrified, because we

may assume that we ourselves and our friends are predestined to happiness, and why should we trouble ourselves about others? God is merciful, but then He is just, and so forth. It would not be difficult to go through the usual round of popular statements about God. But when we ask where our theologians got all their information from, our peaceful and confiding temper is likely to be a little ruffled. We find out, in fact, what they have been doing. How they have got at their facts about God and Christ, and mankind and the devil. They have put together a number of imperfect along with a few more pure conceptions of God. They have had no regard to Biblical chronology, no idea that one part of the Bible was any better than another, no respect for historical accuracy, made no allowance for idiom, style, phraseology, allegory, poetry, passion, human infirmity, or the partial state of knowledge to be found in a mass of records of various and often obscure origin, stretching over several thousands of years. They have taken the Old and New Testaments or bits of either, turned chapters upside down, fitted texts on to each other without regard to contexts, joined sentiments together which have nothing to do with each other; in short, treated the Bible with an unintentional irreverence, and an ignorance and falsification to which, perhaps, no other historical work has ever been subjected—and the result? The result is the astounding result of our popular theology, a patchwork God, an artificial Christ, and a scheme of redemption irreconcilable with any intelligible theory of either God or Christ.

In this way, with the best intentions in the world, many of our theologians have arrived at that portentous and alarming familiarity with the character of God which so scandalises ordinary folk who would like to be religious, but do not happen to be theological. But the time has come when men and women who want to be religious, are asking the clergy not what they can twist out of the Bible about God—not what they have voted God to be in seminaries, text-books, and church councils—not what they fancy His dealings are with man, but what *is* God? What *are* the actual relations which He has established between Himself and man? And on what grounds ought our general ideas of the nature of God to be founded? 'Do you know or do you not know; you who pretend to teach us?' That is the question which every moral teacher in every sect will have to answer before long. That is the question which the human spirit will never tire of asking, and will insist upon having solved anew in every age of the world. And the answer which does for one age will not always do for the next; new questions get mixed up with the old, and the old pass away, but the exceeding bitter cry of the soul after God remains constant, and will not be put off with your fancies and your wishes about God, but will demand, 'Tell us truly, do you know anything about it or not; do you believe anything about it yourself? Don't give us high-flown spiritualism, or low grovelling dogmatism about God, but give us some firm ground upon which we may plant our foot and say, Here is a rock. This is accurate, this is, to begin with, scientific; it may not,

as an assertion, go very far, it may point to more than it unfolds. But as far as it goes it expresses something about God which is unquestionably true.' Is not that what we want to begin with?

16. Mr. Matthew Arnold, to whom we are all so much indebted, both for the entertainment which he has given us, and for the intellectual enlightenment which he is constantly dispensing, expressed not long ago in the pages of a popular periodical, the results of much accurate thought upon this great question, and that, amongst other things, proves to me how essentially right I am in sometimes trying to deal in this place with what are called abstruse subjects, for this enables me to discuss religion from reasonable points of view, and to put before you considerations which may not only appeal to the feelings, but may also serve to conciliate the intellect; and we should be thankful to anyone who comes forward, even in the character of a magazine writer, and attempts to give any consolatory and sound answer to the anxious inquiry, 'What is God?'

Well then, as I have elsewhere remarked, to know about God, we must not only look to the religious opinions of persons about us, although we must look to them; we must not only look to the experiences of the human heart, though we must acknowledge them; but we must look to the outward and visible world, where the gigantic footsteps of the Creator are made permanent as it were, so that he who runs may read; we must scan the long succession of past ages, and ask, 'What has history,

what has literature, and what has science to tell us about God?'

The testimony of history and literature I have dwelt upon in other discourses, but Mr. Arnold has pointed out a sure basis for a definition of God, derived from the study of science. When I examine the world without me, I am led to ask, 'Is there really an intelligent God, is there a loving God presiding over this vast order of nature?' What do I find?

I find this:—Whether I look at myself or the smallest insect, whether I look at an animal, or a leaf, or a flower, the same thing strikes me! What is that? It is, as Mr. Arnold acutely observes, 'the stream of tendency, by which all things fulfil the law of their being.' Speaking accurately and scientifically this stream of tendency is God—God may be, and doubtless is more—but He is that. I can say to you, I do not know what the whole of God is, but I will tell you what He is thus much accurately. God is the stream of tendency by which all things fulfil the law of their being. What do I mean 'by the law of their being'? Just this: that everything develops in a certain way, and not in another way. A cabbage develops after the fashion of a cabbage, and nothing else, and if, as ages roll on, there come variations of the plant, yet these very variations take place according to a certain fixed law, the law of being in the vegetable kingdom.

Man in the same way develops after a certain fashion, and not after another fashion, and so in every living thing the law of individual being is developed. There

is a stream of tendency, a co-ordinating principle of life, a permeating and transfusing influence of some sort, whereby each living thing fulfils the fixed law of its being. Man does not grow by chance, man does not make his own law; vegetables don't grow by chance, do not make the law they obey, or tend to obey. There is a law in man—a law of his health, a law of his physical being; when disobeyed, that law asserts itself in disease, in mental misery, in confusion. Something not himself has impressed upon him a physical law. Science may call it a stream of tendency—we will call it God.

17. Is that all? Cannot I through the outward world draw a step nearer to this mysterious God—cannot I add another element to my dry and limited definition of Him? I can. When I look upon the world, I see a moral law as well as a physical law. If I go back to the remotest antiquity of which we have any historical record, I find nations differing in civilisation, in manners, in culture, from modern nations, but nowhere can I find any people who are completely insensible to what is called right and wrong. Their views of right and wrong may not be like ours. They have had their own ideas of right and wrong, but these were always tending in one definite direction; so I find in the most ancient Egyptian proverbs of Ptah-Hetp, about 2,100 B.C., the same kind of moral precepts about virtue, duty, God, which the Christian religion has made us so familiar with. I see then that for thousands of years at least, the world has been impressed by a certain moral law of right and

wrong, which makes for the happiness of man. Man has not made this law—he is in constant and notorious rebellion against it in every age, only a few follow it with any consistency, yet is it as inexorable, as sharp-edged and self-avenging as any physical law,—this moral Not-self impressed upon man. And this other stream of tendency which makes for righteousness, this moral Not-self is also God—it is another element in my definition of Him. I grasp it firmly, so that no one shall take it from me, for it is seen to rest on the basis of the experience of the world. Now let us put the two elements which we have arrived at together—let us see how they read.

1st. God is the stream of tendency by which all things fulfil the law of their being.

2nd. God is the enduring power which makes for righteousness. Have we not thus fairly reached an External Intelligence and Morality, impressing itself upon the world of Nature and Man?

18. And now we have to ask whether this conception of God will beget what we call religion, in the human soul. For that is what we are all seeking. When we come to church we are not pursuing science or simply morality, we are not after knowledge, we are not merely after happiness, but when we come here to worship and to speak of God, and man in relation to God, we are after what we call religion. Now, can you get any religion out of two such ideas as a stream of tendency and a law which makes for righteousness? Does the moral

law kindle you up and warm you? Does knowing the law give you ability to obey it? These questions are pertinent, for what do you mean by religion? You mean that feeling of trust and adoration which leads you to lean upon some unseen power, upon some One, in short, who not only indicates a moral law, but who enters into communion with your spirit, affects your action, moulds your consciousness, cleanses your heart, and subdues your will. To believe and feel this is to have religion. Do you get that by contemplating streams of tendency, or by any conviction about a law which makes for righteousness?

First, let me contemplate a stream of tendency in nature; it is wonderful, it is beautiful, it is also very hard. I admire it and I tremble before it. When I think of this stream of tendency, this physical law, my thought is, no doubt, touched with emotion; but I think it is not religious emotion, it is an emotion similar to that I feel when I contemplate the working of a vast and complicated engine—no emotion of love or gratitude or adoration—there is nothing human, nothing personal about it. I may also experience another kind of emotion—of joy when the stream of inexorable tendency is with me, of grief when it is against me; but neither does that joy or that grief lead me to anything beyond. Why should it, since I am contemplating nothing but a stream of tendency? Suppose I am thrown into the sea and there is a very strong current or tide sweeping to the shore; I feel joy, for I know that I shall reach the shore because the stream is bearing me

on; and when I touch the shore, I say, 'Oh, if that current had set the other way I should have been carried out to sea and been lost, but the current, following the law of its being, has washed me to the shore.' I say this, but I don't say, 'Oh tide! I feel grateful to thee, I offer to the divinity within thee thanks because thou hast washed me to the shore instead of drifting me out to sea!' I cannot say so, because, if I had been thrown into the sea half an hour before, no divinity in the tide would have washed me back. I know I should have been drowned. The current never changes its mind. No miracle was wrought to make the tide wash me ashore; it carried me to the shore naturally. Thus, though I feel joy and satisfaction, I don't feel religious gratitude, so long as I only contemplate a stream of tendency.

19. But now, will any conviction about a power which makes for righteousness, create in me the spirit of trust and adoration? My perception of a moral law may be keen enough, my morality may even be touched with enthusiasm, without its being identical with religion, without its lifting me up to God or going at all beyond a man's naturally keen sense of the *τὸ πρέπον*, the *καλὸν καὶ ἀγαθόν*. Well has Dr. Church, the Dean of St. Paul's, observed (p. 12, 'Sermons Preached Before the University'), 'It is not by religion only that tones of goodness are struck from the human soul which charm and subdue us.' When I see a great abuse my sense of morality is touched with emotion, but that is not necessarily a

religious emotion. I say, 'What an abominable thing it is that this man should be enjoying all the pay, and that that man should be doing all the work. What an abominable thing it is that all these charitable funds should, from year to year, be grossly mismanaged in that way!' My sense of right revolts. My sense of right is kindled into enthusiastic perception that the whole thing is abominably wrong; but I am not aware that there is anything in that which leads me to God. Numbers have felt this, and are daily feeling this, but their feelings have not led them to a God; their musings on the moral law—nay, their practice of the moral law, has not by any means always been connected with God. Neither the 'tendency' nor the 'moral law' gives what we mean by religion. 'God is a stream of tendency,' 'God is a moral law,' I have found Him thus far. Is He nothing more to me?

20. May I not continue one step further my process of thought, and ask, is there nothing more written about God in the outward and visible world, in the recesses of the human heart? All religion leans not upon the vague, it requires a personal, a sympathetic element, and can I not discover a warrant for this sympathetic element in God? If there is a physical law in the world from which I argue that God must have points of contact with matter in his character of A STREAM OF TENDENCY, if there is a moral law pointing to a divine order or arrangement of moral qualities according to A POWER WHICH MAKES FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS, may I not go a

step further and point to the affectional regions of life as indicating an affectional and SYMPATHETIC ELEMENT IN GOD? What do you mean by love: what do you mean by friendship and tenderness and sacrifice? All these things are qualities admirable and divine, which are evolved often in spite of great obstacles in the human heart. But how did they come into the human heart? Where did they come from? If they are the offsprings of convenience, or mere utility, or a desire for pleasure, how is it that they are constantly exercised in opposition to what people are agreed to understand by the words convenience, utility, and pleasure? If they are the survival of the permanent instincts—the higher instincts over the lower—what teaching, what passion has prevailed to enable men as individuals to resist lower forms and choose the higher, to find their pleasure in what is their pain, to find their gain in what is their loss, to find their triumph in their defeat, to find their life in death?

We answer, man has been able to do all this and to feel all this, because there is not only a moral law, but a sympathetic law inscribed in his heart. And from the love that is in him, which enables him to triumph over himself and to live for others and to aspire, he is led to rest in some great central source of love, from whence his own being flows; he is able to say, 'God is love, and He has sent His Spirit into my heart crying, Abba, Father.'

But the instant we say 'God is love,' we are asked, 'Then why this cruelty? Does God care for man any

more than He cares for cattle? Why does God take away our children, and our wives and husbands? Why does not He protect us from shipwreck and other catastrophes if we are dear to Him? Why all this pain, why this torment, why are we left desolate? Why do great losses crush our sensibilities, and make us sour, and bitter, and infidel—we who want to worship the Father—a Father who never seems to take any notice of us?'

21. Brethren, in my last address I tried to show you how, by the constitution of our minds, by the necessary limits of human thought, we could only apprehend God relatively, could not know Him in His totality. To those who know so little, much may seem unjust and cruel which is neither. Even when our human knowledge is imperfect, our acquaintance with facts limited, we misconstrue each other's actions, we lay to men's charge feelings of cruelty which do not belong to them. Suppose I had never heard of surgery and were suddenly to see a surgeon cutting off a man's arm, I should immediately exclaim, 'What a brutal man!' But he is not a brutal man, he is doing for the sufferer that which is going to save his life, that which is the best thing to be done. But suppose my intelligence were hardly raised above that of the lower animals, and by the constitution of my mind I could not in any way be made to understand the nature of surgery, I should retain my opinion about the cruelty of the surgeon, nor would any explanation make me think otherwise, owing to the essential

limitations of my mind. And I will not scruple to remind you here of another illustration which I employed. A member of Parliament, when he votes for great measures which are for the good of the country, but which may happen to weigh heavily on his own constituency, so votes because he belongs to a larger world than the narrow circle of his own constituency, yet men immediately accuse him of being remiss in his duties to the constituency. And politicians who have the good of the country at heart well know how difficult it is to carry any great beneficial measures in the teeth of a number of local oppositions, or to get people to understand patriotism when the shoe pinches at home. God is in the highest sense man's representative, but He is more. We cannot, poor provincialists of a narrow world, understand the immensity that must be beyond; we can hardly realise the puny nature of our own mind; we may gaze into the starlit heavens at night, and dream of peopled worlds like ours, only vaster, and guess vaguely at some possible spiritual connection between ourselves and their inhabitants, some mode by which in the present or future our destinies may be bound up with theirs, as the physical order and motion of the planets certainly are bound by one law into a mysterious unity of motion; and then with adoring humility we may recognise the illimitable, the unimaginable ranges of God's legislation, and admit that He alone is master of the larger whole, and we but a little cloud-speck in 'the azure of the all'!

Some such thoughts as these, which I can never sufficiently dwell upon, and which must often force them-

selves upon thoughtful minds, may reconcile us to the fact of God's seeming cruelty, injustice, and insensibility to our pain.

22. And now you ask the nature of man's communion with God. How can we realise His personal sympathy? It is a mystery, but so is all personal sympathy. It is a consciousness, it is a life. Why is it that you love one person, and not another? There may be a person who has no outward attractions, no gift of mind or body, but is even to some extent poor, as to the cast and character of his intelligence, yet you perceive that you love him, and would suffer for him, and even die for him. And there are other people most attractive and gifted, but you say 'they are unsympathetic, to you at least; you care not for them.' What is that mysterious power which has drawn you, which has repelled you? It is the mystery of a personal sympathy. And so with regard to God. I firmly believe that there is what I may term the minor personality of God—that side of God open to man, intelligible to man, the circle within the circle, the limited within the unlimited; and I assume that from this minor personality of God there comes an effluence, a sympathetic force; so that our God thus takes a stream of personal influence, and pours it in waves of tidal emotion upon the human soul; thus He comes unto us, and makes His abode with us; we receive of His fulness, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all. This communication enables men most intellectual, who might attribute their religious consciousness to other sources, who cannot

always justify their convictions—men whose minds are reflective and sceptical—to maintain that they are guided by God, protected by God, not from outward evils, but protected inwardly—taught to look aright on the distresses of their lives, and on the insoluble mysteries of the world; taught the ways and means of finding out how to escape from one sin after another, how to be kindled and comforted in the midst of their afflictions.

And if you are in communion with God, this assurance, this earnest of the Spirit, will come to you also. It is not anything which people can explain to you, but the religious sects in the midst of their narrowness and bigotry, have all, more or less, seized this truth. When they begin to talk about it, they often get into great confusion; they may talk nonsense and give bad reasons, which fortunately satisfy a great many simple-minded people,—the simple minded people understand the root of the matter, and are not so much injured by the bad reasons as we might expect, for they too are brought into sympathy with God, and live.

Let us sit down with the little children and the poor and the broken-hearted, and learn the same lesson, and then we shall lay hold not only of 'a stream of tendency,' and 'a moral law,' but of One who bows down His ear to our complaints, and lifts up the heart 'of them that have no might' by pouring into it a divine strength made perfect in weakness.

III.

CHRISTIANITY.

ARGUMENT.

CHRISTIANITY is one of many religions. It has important affinities with the past, but the Type of Life which it has created constitutes its originality.

The Person and Work of Jesus are then specially dwelt upon, and miracles are discussed.

Christianity has given to the world a history, a system of ethics, and a spirit flowing from a Divine life. Its triumph over Dogma, Superstition, Scepticism, and Crime, is then briefly traced. Its sufficiency is vindicated, and the Character of Jesus is dwelt upon as a proof that His religion favours neither asceticism nor onesidedness.

In the next discourse on Christian Ethics, the permanence of a Moral Law is asserted. The mission of the Jews is dwelt upon ; and an attempt made, by a comparison with the Talmud, to show the points of contact between Judaism and Christianity.

Certain inferences are then drawn. Christianity is still declared to be original, and its characteristics are dwelt upon in some detail.

The teaching of Christ is shown to be superior in spirit and comprehensiveness to all other teaching, and to correspond to 'the deepest thoughts and feelings of human beings.'

Fourth Discourse.

ON THE CHARACTER OF CHRISTIANITY.

DELIVERED JUNE 19, 1870.

WHEN a man comes out of a dark room into the light, his eyes are dazzled, and he discerns all objects indistinctly, not because there is not light enough, but because there is too much light. When I look back to the early effulgence of Christianity I see in that bright dawn a few figures, shadows of men like trees walking, and one form in the midst of them like unto the form of the Son of God. My eyes are dazzled by such a vision, and yet there appears at first little enough for the mind to dwell upon. The records are broken and fragmentary, the details somewhat meagre, and the authenticity in some parts thought by many to be more than doubtful.

Then I ask myself 'Was Christianity nothing but a dream of the past? is it nothing but a sentiment in the present? and is it nothing but a vague and futile aspiration for the future? Is there no body and no

substance in it? Shall we never see anything but a golden mist settling over the first century of the Christian Era?' The heart, which has longings for something definite and tangible, wants to go up to the Lord, as it were, and touch the hands and the side, and be present at the dark hour in Gethsemane, and feel the crown of thorns, and watch the agony of the Cross, in order that it may be fixed and certified concerning the Son of man, and know in whom we have believed.

My brethren, 'What is Christianity?' That is a question which many serious men are asking at the present day. I was talking not long ago to Mr. Chunder Sen, the great Indian reformer, and he said to me: 'There are a great many people in India who want to convert me to Christianity, and I say to them, What is Christianity? and none of them can tell me, or rather everyone tells me something different. I go to the Roman Catholic, and he says it is this; I go to the Protestant, he says it is that; and I go to the Dissenter, and he says it is quite another thing; and each little sect says, 'We are Christians, we have the right Christianity, and all the others are wrong. So,' said Mr. Chunder Sen, 'if I wanted to become a Christian I could not, because they all say so many different things that I really don't know which of all these sects to take up with!'

Now there is a great deal of truth in this. We must have sadly departed from the simplicity which is in Christ—we must have somehow got entirely off the line, right away from the Sermon on the Mount, for instance. I don't think there was any doubt in the minds of those who

heard that sermon as to what Christianity really meant, or what Christ really taught. They did not argue when they heard the words 'Blessed are they which hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled,' and 'Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God'; and those were the sort of words which drew thousands after Jesus, and made the common people very attentive to hear Him. The words did not sound vague; they conveyed a definite meaning, quite definite enough for all practical purposes; and doubtless that meaning was the very essence of Christianity. How comes it, then, that we are asking now, to-day, what is Christianity? That is a question which I shall try to answer for myself and for you this morning, leaving much unsaid, but trying to say nothing irrelevant or superfluous.

In the first place, the time has gone by for ever when it is possible for an educated person to declare that Christianity is true and every other religion is false. That is something like saying that Protestantism is true and Catholicism is false—a kind of half-sense, half-nonsense, and whole untruth. The time has come when Christianity must take its place in the history of the world amongst other religions, and when it must be recognised as a point and a turning-point, in the harmonious religious development of the race. It is our paramount duty to examine these questions and try to award to Christianity, and to the sublime central figure of the civilised world, not any unreal position of our own devising, but the position which, after a sober examination of the facts of history, will ultimately be found to belong

to the Christian system, and to the 'Author and finisher of our faith.' I will first try and deal with the character of Christ's teaching.

24. Many people say, 'There was nothing new in the teaching of Christ; the world had heard it all before.' And we should do well to admit what is admissible in such a statement at once, and to the fullest extent. We might perhaps say that there was nothing very new in any one individual precept of Christianity; that, if we knew enough about the religious developments which preceded it, we should find a great deal of Christianity before Christ. Professor Jowett said in this pulpit the other day that we might take out of past religions all the principal ethical doctrines of Christianity. We might go a step beyond, and say that a good deal of Judaism did not come from Jews, but from Egypt, from Assyria, and so forth. For instance, it may be true that the Jews had no idea of the immortality of the soul before they went to Assyria, and that they brought the doctrine of a future life back with them when they returned from their captivity. Therefore, when Christ came into the world the doctrine of the immortality of the soul had been the belief of other religions, and only in a secondary sense can Christ be said to have brought life and immortality to light in His Gospel. Then most certainly Christianity has taken a great many of its sacrificial doctrines from Jewish ceremonial theology. If you read the Epistle to the Hebrews,—which, by the way, is probably not St. Paul's—you will see an attempt is

made to fit in the teaching and the life of Christ with the Jewish sacrificial rites, with Jewish doctrines of separation and purification, legal punishment, rude justice, and the whole fabric of the ceremonial law of Moses; and you may think the experiment has succeeded or otherwise, as the case may be. But about the fact there can be no doubt in the mind of any honest or ordinarily intelligent and unprejudiced person. The sacrificial portion of Christianity is certainly neither new nor original; but then, it must be added, the Christianity of Jesus is one thing and the Christianity of the Hebrews and some of the Pauline epistles is another. People who think it necessary to reconcile the two systems will be no doubt equal to the task—it may be a little beyond some of us. I am now merely concerned to point out to you that both the Christianity of Christ and of his immediate followers gathered unto itself various elements —the Jewish element amongst them—and that the teaching of Christ, like the teaching of every prophet and reformer, came clothed in precepts and doctrines, and even forms, such as Baptism and the Lord's Supper, with which the world was already familiar. You might go further, perhaps, and single out every petition of the Lord's Prayer, for instance, in the literature that already existed at the coming of Christ. You don't find the very prayer anywhere written down, but you may pick out the several parts of it, or something very like them. Now just in the same way you don't find Christianity itself in the past religions or philosophies of the world; but you may take out a great many points and arrange

them in a certain order, and call that Christianity, and say that the whole of its ethical system was in the world in a sort of fragmentary way, in a sort of general sense, long before Christ came.

25. But supposing it was, what then? Christianity is still none the less original, and none the less divine, even although there may have been nothing unknown, nothing new in its several parts. People seem to think that originality must always consist of novelty in detail, but it does not. Christianity does not consist of such novelty, yet it is original. What constituted its originality was the peculiar order in which it arranged the ethical materials which the world already possessed, and did not seem to know what to do with; the kind of force which it gave to the different moral qualities; in one word, the Type of Life which it actually created and set before the world, *that* was new, although that type was made up of fragments to be found in religions and philosophies of the past. I am not speaking now of the personality of Christ, or the miraculous part of the Gospel, but of Christianity as a system. And of that I affirm that it places before us a new model or type of life, which gives a spiritual importance to some passive virtues, such as humility, patience, and gentleness, which the old world had ignored or neglected; while it reduces the once revered aggressive and violent qualities to an inferior rank, and regulates them by a very strict discipline. Christianity proposes further to complete this new type of life, to crown this new ideal by developing the more

spiritual and mystic side of human nature, which had often been recognised and provided for in the mysteries of other religions. Christ teaches us to carry on the development of our religious feelings, of our infinite aspirations under the influences of Purity and Love—twin-stars revolving around each other, making one centre of life, out of which springs the development of the world, and the harmonious progress of human society.

26. Then we come to the Person and the Personal Work of Jesus Christ. People want to know who Jesus really was, whether He was man or God, and if God, in what sense God. Then what was the nature of His work for man? Many maintain boldly that His influence depended upon His mysterious conflict with the evil one; that a certain wound, as it were, was inflicted upon the power of evil by the contests and struggles of Christ Jesus whilst on earth; that indeed the conflict between good and evil did not cease when the struggle ceased between the humanity of Jesus Christ and the devil, but that the power of evil was nevertheless lamed for our good by the life and death of Christ; so that now we can overcome evil more easily, and conquer as it were in His strength. I think I may safely say, without fear of contradiction, that some such teaching as this is frequently heard in our pulpits.

First, then, with regard to the Person of Christ. His own account of Himself was, that He was the Son of God, but that His Father was greater than He; that as a son He was not omniscient, nor raised above the need of

comfort and help which could alone come from the Father; nor free from temptation, nor free from pain, nor free from death though not held by death; that although thus a man amongst men, He was nevertheless so intimately associated with the Spirit of the Divine Being, as to represent God as only God could be represented to man, *i.e.* through man. Much more than this I don't know, and so I cannot dogmatise after the fashion of the Schoolmen, who concocted creeds and articles and tests of belief for after generations. But when I am asked to define what I mean by Christ, I use such expressions as these. There was something in the nature of the great boundless source of being called God which was capable of sympathy with man. That something found outward expression and became God expressed under the essential limitations of humanity in Jesus. That such a revelation was specially necessary to the moral and spiritual development of the human race I believe; that such a revelation of God was actually made to the world I believe. More than this I cannot pledge myself to.

27. Now, with reference to the work of Jesus Christ in the invisible world, I can also pretend to know very little, and therefore you cannot expect me to tell you more than I know myself. I do not know much about what the effect upon the invisible world of Jesus Christ's struggle with evil may have been. I know that when a man struggles with evil in this world, he weakens its power and strengthens his own. 'Resist the devil and he

will flee from you,' has come true more than once to some of us. I can believe there are arrangements that are unknown to man, whereby the virtue of one man profits another—it is certainly a law in this world. I cannot tell you much about such things, but I will say that the personal work of Jesus Christ upon the powers of evil is limited, as to our practical knowledge of it, to the work which He did whilst on earth, and the force of His example, and the power of His spirit, as it encourages us, and enables us to follow in His footsteps.

28. Then as to the miraculous part of Jesus Christ's life. There are the miracles. What are we to think of Jesus Christ's miracles? Well, they are simply questions of historical evidence. You know a great many educated men think that the miracles were no miracles at all; that they either never took place at all, or that they did not take place as they are reported to have taken place; in fact, a great many thoughtful persons in their hearts accept the moral teaching of Christ, but reject the miracles. These people probably call themselves Unitarians, or are favoured by some other appropriate nickname by their friends. I confess, my brethren, I once thought that there was a great deal to be said for this view of the question; but I will not disguise from you the fact that as I have grown more mature, and weighed a greater number of facts, I am far from being of opinion that this view about the miracles of Jesus Christ is the correct view, viz., that they never happened at all. Observe a distinction, which is not a

very abstruse one, though it will require some attention. If you mean by a miracle some extraordinary event which happens without any adequate causes, or any causes at all, then I say I do not believe in the possibility of any miracle. But if you mean by a miracle a certain unusual occurrence which takes place without any apparent cause—that is to say, that you cannot point out the cause of it—then I say I think a belief in that kind of miracle is a very rational belief. Then, granting the possibility of miracle in that sense, the only point will be, did such and such an alleged miracle take place, and that of course is simply a question of evidence. The evidence for some of the miracles—the Resurrection, for instance—is as good as the evidence for most other events which we accept as historical. It is difficult to imagine how it could have been much stronger—at the same time it is naturally insufficient to convince those who admit that no evidence in the world would convince them of such a fact. The same remark may be made of other miracles. The strongest evidence on certain subjects leaves certain persons where it found them—incredulous. It is, however, just worth while to observe that there has been no age in history when we do not find well-authenticated accounts of alleged miraculous or unaccounted-for events having taken place. The best men of the day were unable to explain the agencies at work. These agencies were therefore naturally called miraculous. Such occurrences were not confined to Christ's time, nor to Christ.

Indeed there was a time when no important event in

history seemed to pass without signs and wonders; miraculous powers were attributed to most great men; and many a reformer was also a thaumaturge. And that is a simple bit of history which people don't like to be told, and so the clergy as a rule don't tell them. It is supposed that when godless men, puffed up with the pride of learning, talk in this way, they want, by claiming evidence for disputed miracles, to throw discredit upon the Christian miracles. They may or may not. If that is their object, I think they fail. All I am concerned with now is the remarkable fact that—if evidence, and close historical evidence, is worth anything—unaccountable things have happened in all ages of the world. You may explain away a vast number of cases, but you will find a residuum left that you cannot explain away. And if I wanted any proof of this, I should simply say the superstition about the miraculous, if superstition it be, is as rampant as ever amongst us. The scientific world itself has not escaped the taint. It is all very well for some writers to insist that a belief in the miraculous is growing extinct—that no one now believes this or that odd occurrence to be possible; that all such fancies are out of date, or can be easily explained. Facts are unfortunately against such assertions. Of course, when anything which cannot be at once explained is said to have happened yesterday, the very same people who are abjectly credulous about what happened 1,800 years ago, are as abjectly incredulous about what is said to have happened yesterday, although the evidence for yesterday's event is twice

as good as any evidence for events 1,800 years ago can possibly be.

In some circles the very rumour that spiritualism is to be scientifically investigated raises a hoot of indignation throughout vast Philistine communities, who pride themselves on common sense. Yet there has never been an age—this age least of any—when we have not heard a great deal about the supernatural—when things have not happened which nobody could explain; nor can it be maintained that the sort of explanations which the scientific world has hitherto offered us are at all adequate to account for the phenomena of spiritualism. The explanations which have been put forward sufficiently prove the amount of imposture that is associated with the word 'spiritualist;' but then we knew all that before. We wanted the scientific men to explain the residuum which puzzles most people who have paid any attention to the subject; but they prefer to discourse beside the mark to people who are already satisfied that the whole thing is imposture. We will not say 'They are all dumb dogs, they cannot bark;' they are rather like shy horses; they refuse to approach the hand that is stretched out to them, for fear of being caught.

I am propounding no theory about spiritualism. I hardly know what it means, or why it is called spiritualism. I merely affirm that occurrences which cannot be confounded with conjuring tricks—seeing that conjurors and men of science are alike challenged to investigate them—seem to me to occur, and they certainly seem to me still to await some adequate explanation. I will

commit myself to no theory. I have none. I merely aspire to be honest enough to admit what I believe—that a class of phenomena are daily occurring in our midst which have not been explained; and perhaps I may be allowed to indulge in the vague hope that many hundreds of thousands who are so far of my opinion throughout the civilised world, are neither born fools nor confirmed lunatics, although I regret to say that some who are believers are impostors as well.

But whatever truth or untruth there may be in these opinions, one thing is tolerably evident to my mind, and it is this—that if you accept the Christian miracles you cannot reject all others. You must know that the keenest intellects of the day tell us that the evidence for many of the mediæval miracles is just as strong as the evidence upon which we receive the Christian miracles, and in many cases far stronger; therefore, if you do receive the Christian miracles, you may be led a little further than you like, and have to accept the miraculous in other ages as well. On the other hand, it is open for you to reject the miracles, all miracles whatever, as *a priori* impossibilities in any sense. Personally, as to many questions in and out of the Bible connected with the miraculous, I prefer to hold my mind in a state of suspense; for in these days thought is so rapid and many-sided, that a man is unwise who pretends to make up his mind about everything upon which he is called to give an opinion. When I know very little about a thing, I say I know very little about it; and when I am in doubt about things which are being fiercely discussed

upon other platforms, I say I am in doubt about them; and when I know nothing at all about them, I say so.

Of course this makes my teaching, such as it is, very unsatisfactory to those who want to know all about everything. There are numbers of clergymen in every sect and party who can supply that information, but I do not profess to be one of them. There are, perhaps, few who really prefer 'the malady of thought' to 'the deep slumber of a decided opinion.' Yet I will cast in my lot with these.

29. And, now, do any of you feel disposed to ask what is left of Christianity? I answer, three things are left. 1st, so much of its history as will stand the test of fair criticism; or, in other words, so much of its history as is true. 2ndly, a system of ethics tending to form a peculiar and original type of character. And 3rdly, an actual and substantial, moral and spiritual influence, exercised from the time of Christ down to the present moment. These three things remain, and they cannot be taken away from us.

30. I will close this morning with a few words on Christian influences. As we look back through the ages which have elapsed since the coming of Jesus Christ, we can trace the influences of a divine spirit superintending the moral development of the world, sympathising with man, and acting upon him through the ideal personality of Christ. It is indeed wonderful to observe how Christianity has been working its way through all kinds

of misconception: parodied by its professors; a cloak for abuse, bigotry, violence, and shame, and all kinds of vindictive persecution; trampled upon again and again, and often brought into contempt through the confused notions and the muddle-headedness of men who knew not what spirit they were of. It has been despised and rejected, and has come out of great tribulation; it has been brought into contempt by the priests, broken and wasted by the people, and we in these latter days have now to gather up the fragments that remain. It has been twisted into every kind of contorted creed and dogma, and cast in the strange moulds of a dozen different philosophies; yet historically, ethically, and potentially, it has survived.

Christ is not responsible for all that we call Christianity. If we want to discover the origin of dogmas about the Trinity, the Incarnation, and the Procession of the Holy Ghost, we must go to the Greek schools of Alexandrian philosophy, not the Gospel. Our theology, as an historical fact, is not derived directly from Christ or even his apostles; it is the result of the Greek mind at work upon the Gospel materials. We Westerns are actually looking at Christ and his followers and his Gospel through Eastern, not Western eyes. The Greek mind has done our theological thinking for us—done it in a way we should never have done it for ourselves; and to this day we are repeating and pretending to understand distinctions of Greek metaphysics perfectly natural to the Greek and as completely unreal to the modern European. The Greek mind could not bear to

have anything undecided or inaccurately defined; hence the famous creation of many Christian dogmas. These we have embalmed in our creeds and articles, the substance of which was mainly translated by the Roman doctors out of Greek. In these we have no longer—we do not even profess to have—the simplicity which was in Jesus. What we have got is very remarkable; it is, in fact, Christianity as it gathered form and substance in the later Alexandrian schools. A little further we shall have to seek the explanation of numerous subtle distinctions in the controversies of the third and fourth centuries —each of which has left its fatal war-mark upon some ancient creed, collect, or formulary. What could they know about the exact sense in which Christ was the Son of God, or the way in which the Holy Spirit proceeded from the Father and the Son? Why, of course they knew no more about it than we know. They only had the Old and New Testaments and their own brains, and we have no more and no less. Yet their speculations have been set down as next door to infallible truth; and hence our theological heart-burnings, our bitter controversies, our wild and futile attempts to get a rational theology out of the creeds and formularies of the Christian Church.

Do you suppose that I am ungrateful for the creeds and formularies of the Christian Church? Do you suppose that I deny the truth which, in another age and country, to other nations and other civilisations, they nobly strove to utter? I trust I am not so thankless or so foolish. When we look at the great round-bore

cannon of our old navy, or walk the deck of Nelson's ship, what do we say? We say, if it had not been for these we should not be where we are now; these were the defences of our national honour; these are the witnesses of a valour and endurance never more needed than at the present moment. These old relics have taught us great things. Out of them have arisen all our modern improvements. The war, whenever it comes, will be essentially the same as the war they waged, though the method be different and the implements be changed. But put to sea with the old ships! fire the old guns!—the notion is too absurd. Brethren, you may not think the parallel a good one. But the constant revival in this age of worn-out theological controversies looks to me very much like putting to sea with the old ships, so that the very words Predestination and Verbal Inspiration are in my ears as the explosion and bursting-up of old smooth-bore cannon. No one would contend more eagerly than I for the essential truth underlying the creeds, and even the articles; but to use them literally has become finally and for ever impossible to any but professional theologians, who are about as much concerned with truth as the Greek sophists in the days of Socrates were with philosophy.

31. We read in one place, that when the people wished to seize Christ and hurl him down a precipice, he passed through the midst of them all and went on his way in safety. Observe, in like manner, how Christianity, with the same quiet and sublime confidence, has passed

through the hands of all those who have sought to imprison its free spirit in forms, and strangle it with dogmas. It weathered with ease the storms of early persecution; it was found impossible to exterminate it. Crushed in one place, it rose up in another. Christ's blood poured forth seems to have fertilised the whole earth, and the arms stretched out victoriously upon the cross have, century after century, gathered in the flower of the human race. But the wounds which Christianity has received in the house of its friends are more deadly. Its free growth has been checked by a rigid theology. It has been dismembered and cut up into Greek idioms and Roman formulas; yet it has risen superior to these; and simple men, who could not believe the dogmas or understand the metaphysics, believed Christ and the Gospel of His mercy and the life of Love.

The mediæval Christianity was full of the grossest materialism; transubstantiation was the favourite doctrine; relics of all kinds, full of saving power, abounded. We have the handkerchief of Veronica, the crucifix of Nicodemus, the image traced by angel hands, and still revered at the Lateran. Of course the exposure came, but the religion of Christ survived that shock also.

Then followed a searching investigation into the history of Christ, and people asked what are the facts? Christianity thus came for the first time under the influence of historical criticism, which has enabled us, and no doubt will enable us more and more, to detach the true from the false in all existing historical records. We have got in this way at last something like true pictures of Greek

and Roman life, something like true facts of Greek and Roman history; and with patience we shall, no doubt, arrive at clearer and more accurate views of Jewish and Christian history. The process is going on, but I do not see that the three positions which I have pointed out are in any danger of being destroyed by historical criticism.

It must be a clear gain to learn more accurately what Jesus Christ really was, what he really did, what he really said. An accurate study of history must greatly help us here.

It must be a clear gain to realise more fully the type of life which Jesus created. History can show us what that was, and how it has been grasped in different ages and by different churches.

It must be a clear gain to watch more closely the victorious struggle of Christianity with the evil tendencies of human nature. History unfolds before our eyes the great and exciting drama of that struggle, its failures, its vicissitudes, and its triumphs.

32. When, then, people ask us, What has Christianity done? we point to the actual facts around us. What are the influences in this populous city which make for righteousness? What is the leaven that is working at this moment in the lump? Almost every active, moral, and spiritual influence in the world at this instant is directly or indirectly connected with Christianity. If it does not directly date back to the work of Christ Himself, it yet flows from the Spirit of Christ. We can

place our finger upon definite points in past and present history, and show how the religion of Christ has jewelled the Ages with divine benefactions. You need not recall religious persecutions and deeds of human violence; such have been done in Christ's name, but they are none of his. The leaven may not work suddenly, and violence and bloodshed and hatred and malice will not disappear in a day; but whether you acknowledge it or not, the leaven is working, the power is going forth conquering and to conquer, blessing and to bless.

Amidst the corruptions of the Roman empire Christianity stepped in to restore purity of manners. It abolished the gladiatorial exhibitions, taught a new law to warriors, and superintended the civilisation of those barbarian hordes which came down upon Italy, and which we may fairly say Rome did not know how to manage, or what to do with. Beneath the tender philanthropy of the new religion, hospitals and refuges sprang up all over the Roman empire. Every man was taught to be his brother's keeper; and a spectacle of organised self-sacrifice and voluntary poverty drew gross and selfish men close to the servants of one whose kingdom was not of this world.

Then, again, turn to the jurisprudence of modern Europe. Who can say that the Roman law, which is the foundation of our European codes, has not been profoundly influenced by Christianity? In England, at all events, its administration is excessively tempered with Christian lenience and humanity. The effort to abolish the distinction between law and equity is distinctly

Christian. Men have felt that it was a monstrous thing to say, 'This is good in law, but it is bad in equity, *i.e.* the law is hard and unjust;' and they are seeking to harmonise the two systems, and so to make the law a more real representation of kindness, justice, mercy, and truth. This spirit of mildness and fairness which is being introduced into modern jurisprudence, of which the only other parallel is to be found in the tenderness of the Talmudical code, is another result of Christianity, which so carefully preserved every jewel of the Talmud.

Slavery and polygamy have yielded to Christian influences. There is nothing in the Gospel against slavery or polygamy, but the leaven has been working in the lump, and these things are fast disappearing from off the face of the earth.

I know that the answer to all this will be, 'It is not Christianity at all, it is the development of civilisation which has effected the changes you allude to.' But, my brethren, the world had seen some very high levels of civilisation before the age of Christianity—levels which, in some respects, have never been reached since—yet the highest state of civilisation could not put down excesses of extravagant corruption which we shudder even to read of. It was when the civilisation of the Roman empire was at its highest that these corruptions were most monstrous. It may be more true to say that Christianity is the influence in the world without which these evils would not have been abated, than to say that Christianity has put down these evils. Christianity, in many respects, is but another word for modern

civilisation, for Christianity has mixed itself up with the forces of the new world. It insists upon not being distinct. It refuses to be set apart by itself. It claims, in the name of the Son of Man, all that belongs to man. It hunts man; it will have him for its own; it cares for all that is his, for all that he is. It comes with the fire to purify; it comes with the washing of water to cleanse; it comes with the bread and wine to build up and strengthen the fibres of his natural and spiritual body; it has come into the world to remain there and to regenerate society.

33. You may think that I am shutting my eyes to the evil that remains, that I am claiming more than can be claimed for the present state of the world. There are still gigantic evils in this city of London. In New York, in Paris, in Vienna, in Rome, we have still got brutal passions to contend with, and all sorts of abuses and corruptions. There is, perhaps, hardly any form of crime once prevalent in old Rome which is not still to be found in our great European capitals. I acknowledge that. Then you say, 'What has become of your Christianity?' I will tell you what has become of it. It has become a chief element in the regenerating influences about us; more than a part, the very mainspring of those influences. The aspect of public opinion is changed towards vice. That is the difference between old world and new world crime. In this respect there is an immeasurable gap between the crime of old Rome and the crime of London. The crime of Rome, in its degenerate days, went on under the sanction of public

opinion, or with very little public feeling to oppose it; only a few men stood aside and attempted to make head against the stream of immorality which threatened to overwhelm them. Public opinion sanctioned it; whereas in London public opinion is dead against it. I know the public mind wavers about certain points of morals, and some big ones too. But that is generally because the really moral course is still somewhat doubtful, in detail at least. Where there is no doubt there is no hesitation. Practically, there is a dead set being made in decent society against immorality. The literature of a country is a tolerably good reflector of a country's manners and morals. If you look at our literature, although we are getting a little unscrupulous in certain directions, yet, take the literature of the country throughout, its tone is morally sound; it is in spirit a Christian literature. The tendency is certainly upwards, whereas in other ages and countries it has been as certainly downwards. It may be asked, 'Why does not Christianity make the world good all at once?' It never professed to make all good at once. It never professed to supersede free will, to act the despot, to ruin man's personal responsibility, and the value and dignity of his life along with it. To be conjured into goodness would involve the destruction of what we mean by goodness, which is a preference for righteousness and a sustained and joyful activity in a right direction. Goodness is an energy and a growth, not a miracle.

34. I have nearly done, my brethren; but I must meet

one more objection. People tell us that Christianity is only part of a system, that it takes a narrow view of life, that it does not take into account the whole of human nature, that it takes no notice of political economy, that it does not sanction a great many things now found to be true, and that it recommends others which are found to be deleterious. What do people expect Christianity to be and to teach? Did you expect Jesus Christ to point out to you the continent of America? Did you expect Jesus Christ to show you how to construct the steam-engine? Did you expect Him to explain to you the laws of supply and demand, or regulate wages, or unfold to you the laws of historical evidence? All these things are left to man to find out for himself. No special revelation will be given—none is needed. We are not servants—we are free sons. To us will come not the despotism of an *arbitrary* law, but the revelations of time, of history, of science, and of experience. These will teach us their own lessons; but Christ moves in a different plane altogether. The few rules He gave were for the time in which He lived, not for ours; the principles which He revealed for the general conduct of life, were for our time and for all time. For they were such principles as could be applied to various states of knowledge, forms of government, and conditions of life.

It has been said that Christ must have been opposed to a great deal that is lovely, and good, and natural in itself; that His Gospel gives no countenance to the influence of the arts and sciences. Is it so? The 'pale Galilean' who has conquered, is He opposed to all these

things? I admit a certain form of Christianity is opposed to them; that, very soon after Jesus Christ passed away, people emaciated themselves and got into a mad ascetic life, which brought forth a mad ascetic form of the Christian religion. But Christ never recommended this; He never taught it, He never lived it. When He spoke of the world in terms of reprobation, as a thing to be shunned, He meant the evil that was in the world, nothing more, nothing less. He never shunned the world Himself like John the Baptist; he never taught His disciples to be sad or to fast constantly. He said they could not be sad, they could not fast, as long as the Bridegroom was with them. Sacrifice He taught, but never sacrifice for its own sake; always sacrifice for a worthy object, for the kingdom of heaven, in the cause of Christian progress; for truth, for honour, for love. The early Christians were, no doubt, against art, which they associated with only Pagan influences. They were also against family ties, and many social pursuits, which they dreaded as obstacles to Christian progress. But this was a misreading of the mind of Christ. Christ morose! Christ a solitary, a selfish monk! Christ a scorner of human affection! Christ an enemy to the arts and sciences, the utilities, the recreations and the beauties of life! That is not my Christ. My Christ has a large heart, a clear, divine, piercing intellect; my Christ is one who loved nature and loved men; one who used to watch the clouds changing their colours at sunset and sunrise; who loved to walk out on a clear morning and see the corn growing, and watch the shadows on the

fields, and the flight of the birds; who loved to hold long conversations with his friends and disciples; who loved to go about among the people, to sit with them at their feasts, and give them wine; and who partook often of their repasts, and joined freely in their talk, so that none ever seemed to feel awkward or constrained in His presence, such a divinely sympathetic element was there about Him.

How do you know you have a perfect picture of Jesus Christ? You have glimpses and traits, and you can reconstruct Him in part. But how do you know there was not a great deal more in His life and teaching than appears in the Gospels? Of course there was. These records are very fragmentary. They do not tell you, for instance, that Jesus Christ ever smiled. Do you think the little children would have ever run after Him if he had never smiled? Be sure all that pertains to Man was in Jesus Christ, else he would not have been the Beloved. The common folk felt this; they were very attentive to hear Him. And my Christ was one who knew the way to their hearts. They were astonished at the gracious words that proceeded out of His mouth; they would follow Him into the wilderness, they would go up the mountain to Him, they would wait for Him upon the shore, they would climb the trees to see Him, they would strew the palm-branches in his path. The dull eye of death brightened at his approach, the palsied hand of disease grew steady, and the poor outcasts washed His feet with their tears, and wiped them with the hairs of their head! Thus He drew all men, and

all women and children to Him, because He loved them —loved those whom nobody else loved, cared for those who had none to care for them; and when the time came, and there was nothing more to be done, having loved them to the end, He laid down His life for them.

That is Jesus Christ whom we must learn to know, and we shall learn to know Him. From the highest heaven there comes down upon the human heart—comes with the voice of many waters—comes with the rushing of mighty winds—the message of God's tender Humanity. That is the message which Christ bore to earth, that is a message which still incarnates itself in all those who are filled with His Spirit,—'as He was, so are we in this present world.' For the divine Humanity in man is a token to all men of the divine Humanity in God. In the highest Heaven there pulsates a joy with your joy, a sorrow with your sorrow; so that the Spirit may be said to grieve over those that go astray, even as there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth. I believe that there is reserved for this age a more luminous unfolding of this truth; so that at the very time when the outward universe is seen to be more and more mechanical, and the laws of being more and more inflexible, a great godlike sympathy will be felt to reach across all these natural developments, and the spiritual and eternal Love will break forth once more upon a universe wrapt in clouds and thick darkness, until the Glory of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea!

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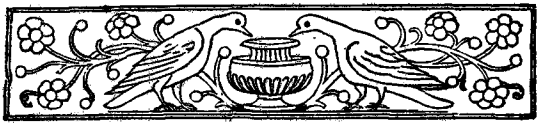

Fifth Discourse.

ON THE ETHICS OF CHRISTIANITY.

DELIVERED MAY 21, 1871.

BY Christian ethics, I mean Christian morals: that code, system, or general theory of right and wrong, which we have unfolded to us in the teaching of Christ and in the life of Christ.

In all ages men have found it necessary to have some theory about right and wrong, some scheme for the conduct of life.

Society is founded upon moral law; it cannot exist without the acknowledgment of some such law; without an attempt, however confused and inadequate, to carry that law into effect.

When we speak of moral law, people very often inquire to what moral law we allude?

They tell us that moral law is variable, that what is right in one age and country is not right in another; hence right and wrong become matters of convenience

or fancy, and have no positive existence. I think this is a mistake. It is quite true that men's definitions of right and wrong differ in different countries and different ages; but it is not true that there is any substantial difference about the broad principles of right and wrong.

Take, for instance, the most depraved tribe of savages. The savage does not think it at all wrong to rob a neighbouring tribe; but he has a code of morality which tells him that it is wrong to rob his own tribe, and he knows that if he does so he will be punished; that is the way his tribe will enforce the observance of what it considers its right. The tribe has a certain rough notion about right and wrong. It is a little of the moral principle carried out, but it is in the direction of the most advanced morality.

In some tribes, murder is regarded from a similar point of view; you must not kill your own people, you may kill your neighbours. The moral principle of the sacredness of human life has been carried out a little way; it is not usually extended to infants, sometimes not to the aged, but it is extended to the majority of adults; in other words, the principle is acknowledged.

In other tribes the law of domestic honour has a limited recognition. Polygamy is permitted, but no infraction of marriage rights as by the laws of the tribe established. Again, the silent finger of experience points in the direction of a morality not attained, but at least recognised.

And if you look through past ages, you will find that

man's conscience has always been pointing in this same direction; that law has not been a thing *made* by man, but a thing gradually *discovered* by man; which means, that the moral to which he has conformed has always existed in the mind of God, before it became outwardly incarnated in the history of the world.

The social mechanism, the popular constitution of the world, is thus bound up with moral law. Gradually such principles as Purity and Justice, such sentiments as Mercy and Truth, have been evolved; they are seen to be implied in the very constitution of human society, society becoming correspondingly chaotic when one or another of the great binding and socially cementing principles are withdrawn. Therefore we can say with the judicious Hooker, 'Of law there can be no less acknowledged than that her seat is the bosom of God, her voice the harmony of the world; all things in heaven and earth do her homage, the very least as feeling her care, and the greatest as not exempted from her love. Both angels and men and creatures, of what condition soever, though each in different sort and manner, yet all with uniform consent admiring her as the mother of their peace and joy.'

Imagine what would this congregation be, what would this city be, if nobody had any idea of right, or wrong, or justice, or mercy, or truth and honesty. Or if all had different notions, and were willing to act upon them. Or if nobody acted upon fixed principles intelligible to all, binding upon all? Don't you see the great confusion that does actually enter into the world—into the

commercial world, for instance—because people do not carry out fully the divine laws of honesty and truth? It is not because there is any substantial difference of opinion upon such subjects. There is not. We all profess to be just and honest, and no doubt to some extent we are just and honest, and that is the only reason why human society hangs together at all.

36. Well, then, if you will thus admit the existence of human law which is also divine law, I shall hope to show you to-day how the moral law has been working like a kind of divine leaven in the mass of this world's corruptions, mastering one system of thought after another, moulding one civilisation after another, traversing the ages until it is seen to culminate in the complex moral system to which we give the name of Christianity. And I wish more especially to show you the points of contact between Judaism and Christianity, explaining the pre-eminence of Christian ethics as the crown of Judaism over all other ethics, and showing in what that pre-eminence consists. Such are the subjects which I shall try and bind into one uniform scheme of thought for our meditations this morning.

37. My brethren, God has never left himself without a witness. God has committed certain work to be done, not only to individuals, but also to nations. Just as he committed to the Romans the evolution of law for the world, and to the Greeks the evolution of beauty and symmetry for the world, both in philosophy and in art,

so He has committed to the great Semitic race the evolution of the spiritual law. What do I mean by the Semitic race? We must go back far into the night of antiquity. The Semitic race included that people who dwelt in the country between the shores of the Mediterranean and the shores of the Indian Ocean. The Semitic race started from there, and flowed from that central position into almost every other country of the world, and ended as we shall presently see, by impregnating the civilisation of the world. It is most remarkable, as we look down the long vista of years, to see the wonderful way in which one race has thus been a spiritual leaven to the whole world. That race was the Semitic race; and that portion of the race with which we are mostly concerned sprung from the captive Jews in Egypt.

That profound Rabbinical scholar, Emanuel Deutsch, has pointed out a fact which we believe he was the first to call attention to—that the Jews, the great missionary race of the world, the great spiritual enthusiasts, and the prophetic guardians of the moral law, were brought into contact with the other chief nations of the world just at the time when each had reached its culminating point; that is to say, just at that time when each was most able to receive and be healthily inoculated with the Jewish influence; and it remains an historical fact that so the various nations became more thoroughly impregnated with the moral law than they would otherwise have been.

You know that when the Jews became a tribe of captive slaves in Egypt under the Pharaohs, Egypt was

at the acme of its civilisation. The government of the Pharaohs was, as far as we can gather, a wise and powerful one; and that civilisation which we now read of very dimly on the Egyptian monuments was then the leading civilisation of the world. It was at such a time that Egypt received into its heart a nomad fragment of the Semitic race.

Some centuries afterwards the Jews fell into the hands of the Assyrian Kings, at a time when the Assyrian empire had reached its highest pitch of civilisation; and they not only received a great deal from Babylon, but communicated to it a great deal of their moral force; for you may read that the nations which took them captive were most astounded at the persistence with which the Jews worshipped their one God; and one of their kings —at least one—proclaimed that only the God of Israel should be worshipped, because he was the only true God.

When the Jews returned from Babylon, they came into contact with Greece and with Rome. Greece, it is true, had at that time passed its glory, and had been absorbed into the Roman empire before the Jewish nation became part of the Roman world; and therefore we may say that Rome and Greece were impregnated with Semitic religious influences both together. You know how great an indirect influence the Jews had upon their captors; how steadfastly they adhered to their traditions, how enthusiastic they were for the one God worshipped by Israel. And it was from these poor Jews, who were constantly being taken captive by one

nation after another, who could never take care of themselves, from this despised race came Jesus Christ, who gave to the world the purest and most exalted system of morals which the world has ever had. It was the religion of Jesus Christ which gave to Judaism its imperishable crown. It was the religion of Jesus Christ that gathered into a focus the scattered rays of an ideal humanity; and it was the religion of Jesus Christ that impregnated the Roman empire before the Roman empire split up into a thousand fragments, out of which fragments have arisen the nations of modern Europe.

38. The passage between Judaism and Christianity, between Jewish morals and Christian morals, was not nearly so abrupt as we are in the habit of supposing. I shall try and trace in a few words the moral and spiritual growth of Judaism up to Christ, showing how the hardness of the Mosaic law was undergoing constant modifications, and how the world, as by a good schoolmaster, was being prepared for the new dispensation in Christ.

When the first temple was destroyed, there were destroyed also the Urim and Thummim, the sacred stones on the breast of the high-priest. This sacred breastplate seems to have served as a sort of divine oracle, whereby the high-priest was inspired to give judgment in cases of doubtful meaning in the law of Moses, or to speak authoritatively on matters of right and wrong. At all events, so long as the Urim and Thummim lasted, so long was there an infallible guide in the Jewish

Church, and an outward and visible oracle prepared to deliver inspired judgments. With the destruction of the first temple the divination of right and wrong passed away, never to return. But there were still prophets in the land, always eager to point the moral of historical events and predict the future. The elaborate obscurity and occasional failure of these predictions at last weakened the popularity of the prophets, although they remain amongst the most sublime teachers of righteousness which the world has ever had. They seem to have been in a permanent state of opposition to both Church and State, and alternately the darlings and victims of the people, according as their predictions came true, were favourable to the popular wishes, or the reverse.

But with Malachi it was generally agreed that the last of the prophets was dead; and now the nation seemed to be without an inspired sign and without a living voice. What was left? The sacred records which told them of both these departed glories; the inspired scroll of the Pentateuch, containing the laws given to Moses on the Holy Mount. The life must be hidden there or nowhere. Surely the spark of God's fire does but smoulder; let it be kindled by the breath of man's intellect, and it will shine like a new Urim and Thummim. So thought the most learned and the most religious of the Jews.

They had their Pentateuch, and these records must still be consulted when they were in any difficulty. So, after the return from Babylon, a new life seems to have taken possession of the Jews. They began to awake to

the enormous importance of all their own sacred records and traditions. They gathered up every fragment that remained, redacted and arranged most carefully, with the fullest comments, every scrap of the prophets, now that the great order of the prophets had become extinct. They were building the sepulchres of their fathers with a vengeance now that those grand patriarchs of the religious life were dead; and in the verses of the Bible, and their own commentaries upon them, they were not slow to find what they desired to find—divine rules for the conduct of life, and inspired solutions of its bewildering difficulties. When a man was in any doubt or perplexity, he would take his Old Testament and find some law which, although it did not quite meet the case, met it nearly enough; and he would then get some meaning suitable to his own case out of the text, and call that an inspired solution.

39. The best of such glosses were from time to time written down, and were looked upon as to some extent sacred themselves. By degrees there arose in this way a vast tradition which got written down and put into form somewhere between 520 B.C. and 220 A.D. This remarkable book is still extant, and it is called the Talmud. We must try and realise a little more clearly the necessities out of which the Talmud sprung, and the nature of the Talmudical writings. Many of the old laws of Moses, such, for instance, as those about capital punishment, were very harsh, but they belonged to the sacred records. They had to be applied, yet it was

practically impossible to apply them without violating the instincts of an altered state of civilisation and the inspiration of a more humane age. They must, therefore, be explained and adapted to altered circumstances by a method of ingenious interpretation; every sentence must be qualified, nothing need be taken literally. The Scribes who sat in the seat of Moses managed this part of the work; in their hands rested the development of, and the transcription of the 'Oral Law,' which consisted of an elaborate commentary on, and qualification of the Mosaic Law, adapted to altered times and circumstances.

The teaching of Jesus Christ is thus quite Talmudical in spirit, when He says Moses for the hardness of your hearts gave you such and such commandments; but as He did not seem anxious to trace His new precepts in each case back to the Law, the people at once detected the difference of His method, and observed that He taught them with authority—His own authority, and not as the Scribes, *i.e.* with comments on Mosaic authority.

40. The Talmud is one more witness to the necessity of constant change—constant remodelling of old forms, restating of old truths, the peculiar method of interpretation used in the Talmud, the attempt to make a sentence yield what it cannot properly yield, because it really was never intended to bear the new meanings, the stretching of formulas till they fairly gave way; all this is what Christ alluded to when He spoke of pouring new wine into old bottles, which burst them (leather skin

bottles), or sewing new cloth on to old, which would certainly cause a rent.

We shall not have far to go to find something like the Talmudical method in the present administration of our own Church and State. Our laws are being constantly interpreted and modified, or no just administration of law could be carried on. When laws become obsolete they must be repealed, or new readings put upon them. In the State they are usually repealed. The Church is less fortunate. We have had some striking instances of attempts to stretch and strain and explain away formulas in our Ecclesiastical Courts of late; you know how the poor judges have been at their wits' end to interpret the doctrines of the Church, and to interpret the laws of the Church, so as to avoid the necessity of excommunicating everybody all round, or coming into hopeless collision with common sense. You know what a scandal has been in the eyes of simple folk the way in which the articles have been twisted instead of being repealed. I am not against twisting them if you cannot repeal them; it is better to twist them publicly, and say they are twisted, than to turn out of the Church those high church, those low church, those broad church clergy, who are the vital sap of the Establishment, who are the champions of piety, or of order, or progress. It is much better to make out that obsolete statements ought to mean this, in spite of what they seem to mean, or originally did mean, if you cannot modify them at present; for everybody knows that their repeal is only a question of time for which patience is needed, seeing that the

formulas of belief and the laws of our Church were made at a time when people did not know what they now know, and now they know better, and there is an end of it. To admit this as the position of liberal clergymen and churchmen, is the only way to deal with the differences of opinion within the Church, unless you are sanguine enough to suppose that you can make every one think alike. Theology must be modified in the long run to accord with the best obtainable religious feeling and common sense. Meanwhile, it is no doubt much easier to escape out of the Church, and leave it to fall, like the old Catholic abbeys, into a beautiful ruin, than to stay in and assist with patience and long-suffering at the reform of the most conservative and certainly one of the most valuable institutions in England. What ought to be done with ecclesiastical law is what is being daily done, and done without much difficulty, with civil law. Laws that are out of date, or injurious, or unjust, are repealed; only civil laws are repealed or modified much more easily according to common sense than ecclesiastical laws and religious beliefs; because when people become very religious they seem too often to lose their common sense. If we admit the piety of its members, Convocation is an excellent example of this. When judges have to deal with hard and fast laws connected with the affairs of secular life, they ask their common sense to guide them. They point out where the law is unjust, they show what is obsolete, what ought to be repealed; they agitate for improvement; and what cannot be repealed they construe Talmudically in accordance with

modern liberal and humane tendencies—they qualify, they interpret the parts not always literally, but looking to the spirit of the whole; and just what we do with our civil law, and what we have in a measure feebly attempted to do with our religious law, the Jews in the Talmud tried to do with the laws of Moses. Many of the Mosaic laws were in fact obsolete, some rules had to be deduced, other precepts had to be inferred, and most had to be modified in the direction of a more and more advanced and spiritual morality. Thus it happened that, at the time of Christ's coming, we get a morality in the Talmud far in advance of the Mosaic dispensation, and having many striking points of contact with Christian ethics.

41. But to understand rightly the manifest connection between Talmudical and Christian ethics, we must remember that the Talmud was divided into Mishna and Gemara, that is to say, contained not only a legal but a legendary element. The intellectual faculties appropriated the legal portions of the Bible as we have pointed out, whilst the imaginative faculties took possession of the historical and prophetical portions, thus producing the Haggadah Legend or Saga, 'a thing without authority, a play of fancy, an allegory, a parable, a tale that pointed a moral and illustrated a question, that smoothed the billows of fierce debate, roused the slumbering attention, and was generally, to use its own phrase, "a comfort and a blessing."'

Thus—for it is necessary to bear in mind the legal and legendary nature of the popular instruction of the day

which the Jews were in the habit of listening to when they attended their synagogues—if we desire to realise the kind of moral and religious atmosphere into which the Christian religion was born, a brief comparison of some sentences out of the Talmud, with a few well-remembered sayings of Jesus Christ, will show us more clearly than anything else the exact points of contact or identity between Jewish and Christian morality. I read the following extracts, translated from the Talmud by Mr. Deutsch, in the 'Quarterly Review' of October 1867; and as I proceed, I will recall to your minds words of Christ, not always exactly corresponding to the Talmud quotations, but having the same tone and general ring about them :—

'Be thou the cursed, not he who curses. Be of them that are persecuted, not of them that persecute.' 'Bless them that curse you,' Matt. v. 44. 'Blessed are ye when men shall revile you and persecute you,' Matt. v. 11. 'There was a king who bade all his servants to a great repast, but did not indicate the hour. Some went home and put on their best garments, and stood at the door of the palace; others said, There is ample time, the king will let us know beforehand. But the king summoned them of a sudden, and those that came in their best garments were well received, but the foolish ones who came in their slovenliness were turned away in disgrace. Repent to-day, lest to-morrow ye may be summoned.' Of how many different fragments of Christ's words are we here reminded, whilst the general method and even the moral law entirely reminds

us of One who, without a parable, taught not the people. The king who makes a feast, Matt. xxii. 2. The general negligence of those invited, v. 5. The servants who said on another occasion, *not* 'There is ample time,' *but* 'My Lord delayeth His coming,' Matt. xxiv. 48. The people who wore *not* 'best garments' at the feast, *but* 'wedding garments;' those who came *not* 'in their slovenliness,' *but* 'not having on a wedding garment,' Matt. xxii. 11. The foolish virgins who were surprised at the sudden coming of the Bridegroom, Matt. vii. 26; the wicked servant who knew not at what hour his Lord would come, Matt. xxiv. 50; the good man of the house who knew not the hour when the thief would come, xxiv. 43. These are sufficient to show the essentially popular nature of this parabolic device, or story of a sudden surprise common to the Talmud and the teaching of Christ. Lastly, the turning away in disgrace of those who were unfit for the feast, or unprepared, was the usual conclusion to what we may call the 'Surprise Parables.' The foolish virgins found themselves in the darkness, the doors being closed upon them; the wicked servant was cut asunder on the return of His Lord. The faithless keepers of the vineyard were miserably destroyed, the man without the wedding garment was bound hand and foot and cast into outer darkness, and so forth. And the concluding moral 'Repent ye to-day, lest to-morrow ye may be summoned,' has its parallel in, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand,' Matt. iv. 17; 'Watch, therefore, for ye know not at what hour your Lord doth come,' Matt. xxii. 42.

In the Talmud, again, we read, 'Even the righteous shall not attain to so high a place in heaven as the truly repentant;' reminding us of 'Likewise I say unto you, that joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety-nine just persons that need no repentance,' Luke xv. 7. The Talmud says, 'We, if we are called the servants of God, are also called His children.' Christ says, 'Henceforth I call you not servants; but I have called you friends,' John xv. 15; 'Blessed are the peace-makers, for they shall be called the children of God,' Matt. v. 9.

The Talmud says, 'He who humbleth himself shall be exalted, and he that exalteth himself shall be abased.' Christ says, Luke xiv., 'Whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.' It is unnecessary to match the following with any one or more sentences from the Gospels. 'Whosoever does not persecute them that persecute him; whosoever takes an offence in silence; he who does good because of love; he who is cheerful under his sufferings; they are the friends of God, of them the Scripture says, "And they shall shine forth as does the sun at noonday."' Again, 'The day is short and the work is great, but the labourers are idle, though the reward be great and the master of the work presses. It is not incumbent upon thee to complete the work; but thou must not therefore cease from it. If thou hast worked much, great shall be thy reward; for the master who employed thee is faithful in his payment; but know that the true reward is not of this world.'

Is it possible—without insisting on any rigid connection between the utterances—not to be reminded of Christ's words? Matt. ix. 37, 38, 'The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; pray ye, therefore, the Lord of the harvest that He would send forth labourers into his harvest;' John ix. 4, 'The night cometh when no man can work,' and 'my kingdom is not of this world.'

42. Now, what do I infer from this? That Jesus Christ borrowed from the Talmud? Certainly. Need we be alarmed to confess it? Does it detract from the divinity of his mission as one who came to reveal God to man, to represent man to God? Does it detract from His originality, as that originality has been explained and set forth in my last discourse? Observe the divine naturalness and simplicity of the method employed.

Christ taught the people as the people could alone be taught, as they were accustomed to be taught. He told them things with which they were already familiar. His sermons were something like the sermons of the scribes, and yet different. The people noticed the difference, but naturally enough called Jesus Rabbi. As a teacher He seemed to be merely a very gifted and original commentator on the law—a Talmudical doctor. Not only His images and metaphors were all familiar to them, but the very terms which we are in the habit of regarding as exclusively Christian. It is a great mistake to suppose that the words Baptism, Regeneration, Kingdom of Heaven, Kingdom of God, Son of God, and Son of Man, were peculiar to Christianity. They

were all in vogue at the time of Christ's coming, and He took them bodily and poured a new spirit into them, gave them sometimes also a new body, transfigured them, and moulded them into the unity of teaching which we call Christian truth.

43. Now, to go one step further. Having understood, I hope, that there was a very advanced morality at the time when Jesus Christ came into the world, we have once more to ask, What is Christian morality? What is that which separates it from the Talmud and inspires it with a life and mission for all time? I shall find in the Sermon on the Mount the kernel of Christian ethics, and I will ask, what is the distinguishing character of that sermon? I reply, an enthusiasm of love. It is not the law, although the law is fulfilled; it is not only the sober duty of doing right, but it is something which burns like a fire, which comes forth with a cry of pain and passionate desire; it is, in one word, a 'hungering and thirsting after righteousness.' Nowhere do I find the moral law impregnated with the enthusiasm of a life as Jesus Christ has impregnated it. It is love of righteousness first, and love of righteousness second; not that other things are forgotten, are left out of the Christian scheme; but the spiritual order of arrangement is different from the natural order, which reasons from earth to heaven, for this order reasons from heaven to earth. 'Seek ye first the Kingdom of Heaven, and all these things shall be added unto you.' It is not that we do not want the senses, the intellect, 'All things are ours;'

God gives them to us that we may freely enjoy them. If He gives us intellect, He expects us to make use of it, in religion as in other matters, but this first, 'The Kingdom of Heaven.' This first, the senses regulated; this first, the intellect disciplined; this first, the spirit emancipated from thraldom, left free that it may rise into 'the glorious liberty of the children of God.'

44. To the Christian life as Christ taught it, a certain thoroughness, which can alone spring from enthusiasm, is absolutely indispensable. We want it in this church, we must have it here as well as at home; we don't want to be sitting here like so many torpid human beings, saying our lukewarm prayers and listening to our miserable sermons, and muttering our miserable complaints; but we want to feel, while we are within these walls, that we get some real impulse for the holiness which we talk so much about, that we are receiving into ourselves principles which shall enable us to be working members of the divine polity; children, not only by right, and not only in name, but children indeed of the Father which is in heaven. This is the hungering and the thirsting spirit; this is Christianity.

Now, observe that Christian enthusiasm penetrates far beneath the actions of a man. A man may be a moral man, and yet, lacking enthusiasm, not a Christian. He may do the duties of the law in sincerity, but may not have the law of life in his heart. Again, he may be a keeper of the law, and yet a hypocrite; punctilious about outward performances, but a whited sepulchre; un-

clean inwardly, with no attempt to purify himself, with no spark of love, no inner hungering and thirsting after righteousness.

A man may abstain from violent, unjust, or lustful actions for many reasons; he will abhor such actions for only one reason—because he is filled with another impulse, because he is a member of the divine society, because he is seeking first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness.

It was not that Christ told you that you must regulate your impulses. But He told you that on occasion you must expel them. This seems contrary to everything I have preached for the last four years, but I will explain. Christ directs that when natural and innocent instincts are roused, with a view to their gratification at wrong times, they must be treated as though they did not exist. You must not turn away with sorrow or regret from the temptation; it must be to you as though it were not. The thing which you are tempted to do may be innocent and natural when it comes before you in a moral way, but when it comes before you in an illicit manner, it must not merely be put aside, but must be regarded as non-existent. The impulse, under these circumstances, must not be tolerated; it must be destroyed. Let me give you a homely illustration. If I see a fire in winter, and I come in cold, I am glad, and I proceed to warm myself without any scruple; but if I come in and find a fire on the floor, and my furniture in flames, I do not say that I will keep this fire burning, I will tolerate it, I will let it gently smoulder a little

longer on my grand piano, on my library table, in my book-shelves; but I say that it ought not to be there at all. I will sweep it out of the room, I will extinguish it; it shall be to me as though it had never been. The fire in my house must be limited to my grate, or must be put into my stove. It must not be found upon my stairs, it must not consume my property, it must not be permitted to burn my house down. So when you find that your affections are setting fire to that temple of your body which belongs to the Holy Ghost; when you are preparing to carry a moral devastation into God's world, and to spread ruin amongst your fellow-creatures, Jesus Christ confronts you with such difficult and thorough-going words as 'Whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart;' and 'if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out and cast it from thee;' and 'if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off and cast it from thee.'

Then, again, decisively, 'you must not be angry with your brother without a cause.' It is not that you are to give way a little, but you must not be angry at all. Christ does not say that you are never to be angry; there are just causes of anger; Jesus Christ looked about Him and was 'angry.' But He says, 'without a cause;' that is, where there is no just cause. You must not indulge your own petulance, jealousy, irritability, obstinacy, or violent temper. Such feelings must melt like snow before the breath of love. A powerful influence ever near must evaporate hatred, causing it to melt into thin air, be as though it was not. That is what is meant by

enthusiasm—a new principle of life in the heart. If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature. It is of no use to trifle and parley with bad passions. It is of no use to mitigate their force a little here and there, and be for ever tinkering up the moral sensibilities. When a strong man armed keeps his house, you want a stronger man to come in and take away the armour wherein he trusts. You want God to come and take possession of your hearts, and take away the unclean out of your house, and give you new and vigorous inspirations, in order that you may 'hunger and thirst after righteousness.' As Christ says, 'If a man love me he will do my works, and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him and make our abode with him.'

But Christ did not only teach the love of righteousness. He taught, in a very peculiar sense, the love of man. Our relations with our fellow-men are to be based upon this last ruling passion. The ingenious author of 'Ecce Homo' has called it the 'Enthusiasm of Humanity.' Jesus Christ not only taught us to aspire to God; He also taught us how to aspire to man. He said we were to love everybody! Impossible, you reply; and yet Christ's Kingdom was founded upon that principle. He taught that without it the love of God itself was impossible, and right action to man equally impossible. In what sense could this be true? of what nature is that love which may be given to everybody? Let us see. There are different kinds of love. A man may love his nation or country; we call that patriotic love. A man may love an individual; his affections are then drawn out by qualities in that

individual. Everybody here loves some one individual. Everyone understands the nature of special affection. But there is another love, it is a kind of love which may be bestowed even upon loathsome human beings—people whose manners set your teeth on edge—the uncultured, the unrefined, the disagreeable; to such persons we affirm that it is possible to apply a certain universal affection, even such a love as was the love of Christ. How can these things be? Well, it is possible—it is even essential to the true Christian life. Let us understand this more clearly. The young look kindly and trustfully upon everyone; the kindly feeling may soon turn to suspicion, deception may soon dry up the fresh springs of love, but at the bottom of each heart there is a natural disposition to love; and this remains with most people in some kind of force to the end of life, and comes out in the strangest ways, sometimes in the hour of death. When you see the greatest criminal or the most disgraceful character on his way to the gallows, there is apt to rise a feeling of pity in your heart. 'Well,' you say, 'he too was once an innocent child; perhaps he fell by little and little, as I might have fallen, as I have fallen; perhaps he was found out, and driven from bad to worse, as I have not been found out; perhaps he was tempted above measure, as I have never been tempted; I cannot judge him, but I wish I could save him.' What speaks there? Nothing short of the enthusiasm of humanity—this impossible sentiment—this love of the man in all men; something has drawn your heart to the man because he was a man; the voice of nature has betrayed you into loving him.

If to-morrow you were to see somebody drowning, and a voice whispered in your ears, 'Let him drown; he is not a good husband, he is not a good father, he is a weak, sinful, selfish man;' you would probably say, 'For all that I will save him if I can.' What an irrational sentiment! but there it is, nevertheless; something in your heart that beats for the man because he is a man; now that something is in every man's heart. Christ did not put it there when he came on earth; he found it there; all that he did was to seize upon this latent sympathy, fan it into a flame, and place this enthusiasm of humanity as the corner-stone of his system.

Christian brethren, take this lesson home to yourselves; if you have never learnt it, try to learn it now; if you have never so loved the world, try to love it so now. Remember there is a something in everybody which is worthy of your love. You must learn to look at your fellow-creatures kindly, in the spirit of a little child, to love as the uncorrupted child loves; to love as God loves who makes his sun to rise upon the evil and the good; to love as Christ loved, who loved His own even unto the end.

45. Nor is this all. You have set before you an example; you are not called upon to lead, but to follow. Is this an empty help? Learn, then, the force of example.

You know how from time to time some new feat of incredible skill is performed, and people say that such a thing was never seen before; but a few years only have passed, and there are fifty people doing this very same

thing. Why? in the first place someone has not written or speculated about it, but someone has done it, and that has kindled the taste and awakened energy in others. So Christ lived out the true life, and now others have learned to pass through this world walking in his footsteps; they have learned to worship the Father in spirit and in truth; they have learned to treat God's creatures aright, not looking upon a woman to lust after her, and not hankering after every pleasure that comes in their way; not being angry without a cause, not hating, not returning evil for evil, but bearing one another's burdens, and so fulfilling the law.

And this, we are told, is the impossible type of character. Why, it has been realised ten thousand times since the coming of Christ. Men have looked at His patience and faith, and learned to be patient and trustful; they have seen how He bore with human infirmities, and they have learned to be kind to the unthankful, and forgiving to the unmerciful; they have seen how He suffered, and they have borne their sufferings meekly; they have turned their dying eyes to His cross, as it stands flaming out in the night of the ages, and such a light has come upon their wan faces that others have seen it and glorified the Father which is in Heaven.

46. In conclusion, what shall we now say to those who ask us to show the superiority of Christian ethics over Heathen or even Jewish ethics. We must say that the system of the Stoics, which taught men to be indifferent

to both pleasure and pain, was grand in theory, but it left out the human heart; the system of Epicurus, which taught men to live only for pleasure and flee pain, was wise in practice, but it left out God; the Academics were neither wise nor grand, their best philosophy was to prove that all previous philosophies meant nothing—if not scepticism. Neither the philosophy of Aristotle nor Plato can be said to provide a gospel for the world at large; and although Socrates, as far as we see him through Xenophon, Aristophanes and Plato, was essentially a man among men, and taught the great truth of personal communion with God; yet the defects and impurities which he permitted to his disciples make it difficult to regard his system, if system he had, as one of ideal excellence, or his type of life as at all comparable in elevation to the Christian type.

Lastly, the Jews, as we have seen, had a vast number of scattered sayings full of high spiritual truth. They had emancipated themselves from the letter of the law, yet they had not attained the freedom of the Spirit; they lacked, amid the multitude of their precepts and sentiments, a settled ideal; the scattered rays of truth had not been gathered into a focus; there was some light, but hardly any heat. The Scribes sat in Moses's seat—it was well to mind what they said, they had light—it was also significant to mark that what they said did not seem to influence their own lives. 'All, therefore, whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works, for they say and do not'—they had no heat.

But Christ, unlike the Stoic, knew what was in man and honoured the heart. Christ, unlike Epicurus, pleased not Himself, but endured the cross, despising the shame, and showed us plainly of the Father. Christ, unlike the Academics, taught that faith—the inner trust in God—not scepticism, could remove mountains. Christ, unlike Socrates, taught the necessity of that inward as well as outward purity without which no man can see God. Christ, unlike Aristotle and Plato, preached a gospel to the poor and ignorant as well as to the rich and learned. Christ proposed a scheme of conduct. He created a type of life possible and worthy for all men to imitate. The Christian arrangement of the virtues and vices was absolutely unique. The spirit of life produced by that arrangement was in every sense of the word a new spirit.

The world had not seen any life like the life of Christ before; the world has seen various approximations to it since. It still inspires our philanthropy, it still dominates our civilisation; and the cross at the summit of St. Paul's Cathedral—the central monument of the most powerful city in the world—still bears witness to the triumph of the divine Galilæan.

And lastly, what Judaism could not do, that Christ did. He fulfilled the Law, for He taught not only the precept, but He showed the practice, of an universal love. A love from which it was impossible to escape—which could never grow old, nor fade, nor pass away; which no infidelity could cool, and no cruelty could quench, no sorrow dishearten, and no despair crucify. He has washed the toiling feet of tired humanity; He has

borne its griefs and carried its sorrows; He has known the strain of the battle, and been wounded in the house of His friends; He has called all the weary and heavy-laden home to Himself, and given them rest in the bosom of His Father and their Father, of His God and their God.

IV.

THE BIBLE.

ARGUMENT.

GOD'S WORD is in the Bible, but all that is in the Bible is not God's Word. The Bible may be inspired without being infallible. The history of the canon of Scripture is then reviewed, and the theory of infallibility shown to be of modern origin.

The fear of inquiry is then discussed, and the folly of teaching children views which we no longer hold ourselves is condemned.

Objections to these new views are answered by a reply to another question—'What is the Bible?' The 'All or Nothing' theory is then exposed. What is true is to be believed—the relative nature of Bible truth appears in the varying standards of morality and in the different conceptions of God which are to be found in the Bible.

The Bible is to be tested by itself. It appeals to the moral sense. What is historically true in it must be found out by historical criticism; what is morally true by the moral sense.

A few examples of Bible testing are then given; the value of the Bible is thus placed upon a sure foundation.

The Seventh Discourse deals with the meaning of the word 'Doctrine,' as it occurs in the New Testament. Its inseparable connection with Practice is dwelt upon. The distinction between head-belief and heart-belief is pointed out. The value of a true head-belief is shown, but the power of the heart is declared frequently to counteract the opinions of the head. Auricular confession is cited as a case in point, and a few simple rules for the regulation of belief are suggested.

Sixth Discourse.

ON THE ESSENCE OF THE BIBLE.

DELIVERED MAY 9, 1870.

WE are told that the Word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword.

The Word of God may be sharp, but if our ears are not sharp, that is, attentive, or rather attuned to it, we shall not hear it. Perhaps we may listen to the best of our ability, and even then hear the Word but very imperfectly. A blear-eyed man may try his best to see, and after all see nothing but 'men as trees, walking.' No doubt, in past ages, men have conscientiously listened for the utterances of the still small voice. They have heard imperfectly; they have received erroneous impressions, and often when the impression was correct, it has been but imperfectly conveyed to others.

The writers of the Bible were but men, and although in many cases they were highly inspired men, yet they

were not any the more infallible for that. The Bible is not all God's book, nor the only Book of God. God has many books. To some extent the sacred books of all nations are His. To a very great extent the sacred books of the Jews are His. He has this blessed Book, which is chiefly a collection of Jewish records, which we call God's Book emphatically; not because it is free from human error, for it was compiled by human instruments, but because, on the whole, it contains more about God than any other book we have, it is therefore rightly called God's Book; and it is sometimes called God's Word, although it would be more accurate to say that God's Word is contained in the Bible, than that everything contained in the Bible is God's Word.

48. I am earnestly desirous to explain this morning what I conceive to be the real, the priceless value of the Bible. And I do this all the more willingly because there are a variety of unfounded, but popular opinions about the infallibility and verbal inspiration of the Bible, which have done more injury to the Bible than all the scoffs of the infidel: verily the Bible has been wounded in the house of its friends.

The Bible as a book, is not infallible. The sentences of the Bible are not verbally inspired. If you hold any such theories you will have to surrender them before the searching lights of modern criticism. The Reformation is accountable for the survival and popularity of this doctrine of verbal inspiration, *alias* infallibility,—a doctrine which would have certainly expired along with

Popery, had it not been found necessary to set up an infallible book in order to overturn an infallible pope. Roman Catholics had to be fought; the imagination had to be appealed to; the senses had to be conciliated; the instinct of reverence had to be transferred from a visible thing called the Pope, to an invisible God! Yes, that should have been, but was not; it was far more easy to transfer worship from one outward thing called Pope to another outward thing called the Bible, and that was done; but that could not be done without the all-important assumption that, 'every word in the Bible was verbally inspired, and, therefore, must be literally true:' —that being granted, the Reformers immediately found themselves in possession of a whole armoury of texts, which could be used like the arrows of the Spartan's foemen, not only to inflict wounds but to darken the air. But that is not the value of the Bible, my brethren; that is not the way to use the book out of which are the issues of life. Its power does not lie in infallibility, it is not identical with God's Word. The Word of God does indeed breathe through the Bible, in spirit and in truth, but every book and chapter and verse is not infallible.

The distinction between infallibility and inspiration may be new to some here present; but it is one which, in the interests of enlightened common sense, we are bound to make. Let me illustrate this at once, by an appeal to a case in practical life drawn from the Bible itself.

David was highly inspired in his life, but he was not

infallible in his life. David was highly inspired in his writing, but he was not infallible, nor were any other of the sacred writers.

49. But why should I assume that your ignorance of the commonest facts of ecclesiastical history is absolute? There are those before me who have doubtless studied these questions more deeply than I have; there are those present whose judgment is doubtless sounder than mine; but the commonest learning and the commonest sense should suffice to deliver us from opinions which have been formed without learning and maintained without candour.

What is the history of the Canon, *i.e.*, the set of records bound up together which we call Holy Scripture? Did the people who collected and edited and bound them up always think that no word could be altered? Were they always agreed about the text? Were they always sure about what was inspired and what was not? Did they never differ amongst themselves—those ancient scribes and doctors who have transmitted the sacred records to us—as to which books should or should not be included in the number of sacred books; did they always esteem each book and every part of each book now contained in the Bible as equally valuable or equally true; or is it the case that upon all these questions there has always been the greatest uncertainty, and the most remarkable divergence of opinion amongst those whose opinions are in the least worth noticing?

One glance at the history of the canon of Scripture

will show you not only that the popular views about verbal inspiration are untenable, but that they are also of comparatively modern origin. For, how is it possible to maintain that every portion of the Bible is infallibly or verbally inspired, when those from whom we get the Bible, when those who have told us all we know about it, held opposite opinions not only as to the value and authority of whole verses and chapters, but as to the claim of whole books in it to be called Holy Scripture in any sense of the word whatever?

50. When I was reading for holy orders, amongst other books put into my hands by the Bishop of London to assist me in preaching the Gospel was Dr. William Smith's 'Dictionary of the Bible.' As the work consists of valuable articles written chiefly by the most learned and orthodox divines and scholars in England, I naturally turned with the most eager interest to the article entitled the 'Canon of Scripture,' that is to say, 'the collection of books which forms the original and authoritative written rule of faith and practice of the Christian Church.' Now, if we examine this article what do we find? We find, in reading the history of the Old Testament Canon, the human judgment wavering between different conclusions—seeking to stamp now one thing, now another, as of divine authority, and alternately adopting and rejecting different portions of the Bible accordingly. The writer of the article in question, himself a bishop's examining chaplain, proves that this has been done by those whom we revere as the greatest

and holiest Christians. They never had any idea that in approaching the writings now bound up in the Old and New Testaments, and which we call the Bible, it was wrong to examine them, to reject portions or whole books, to differ with each other upon the relative value of the contents of the other books; that notion is one of modern growth.

51. The early Fathers made little distinction between the apocryphal books which we do not consider Holy Scripture at all, and the Old and New Testament books. They quote them all as Holy Scripture. St. Athanasius, Gregory of Nazianzus, and Callistus reject the book of Esther. Origen, Athanasius and the Council of Laodicæa insert the apocryphal book of Baruch. St. Augustine is very uncertain about what is the canon of Scripture. In a famous passage he includes 'in the whole canon of Scripture' all the apocryphal books. Up to the Council of Trent, Romanists allow the question of what books were canonical or authoritative to have been open. And the Council of Trent made all the apocryphal books canonical, and added a curse upon all who should not receive them as such; since which time different degrees of authority have been given to them at different times.

As things were in this position as late as the English Reformation, we can hardly wonder (and it is a very noteworthy fact) that the original English articles of 1552 contained no catalogue of inspired books at all.

52. Now turn from Old Testament books to the

New. Their history is precisely similar. I notice three periods in the compilation of the New Testament: Tradition, Speculation, Authority. It is a simple fact that nearly two centuries elapsed before it occurred to anyone that any book of the New Testament ought to be called Scripture, or was either of divine or inspired authority. The written records of the New Testament did not at once assume their subsequent importance, were not even collected, for this was the age of Tradition, and they are not quoted with the formulas of respect which always accompany the Old Testament. Then came the age of Speculation. The four Gospels were now separated from a multitude of other accounts of Christ's life. Soon the need of a definite list of books was felt. And then we are introduced to the same spectacle of indecision and arbitrary judgment on the part of this bishop, or saint, or council, which we noticed in the case of the Old Testament. At the close of the second century I find two distinct lists—the canons of the Eastern and Western Churches. The Western Church rejected the Epistle of James, Epistle to the Hebrews, 2 Peter; but inserted the Apocalypse of Peter, now deemed spurious. The Eastern Church accepted the Hebrews, omitted Jude, 2 Peter, 2 and 3 John, and the Book of Revelation. The Epistle to the Hebrews has never been cordially accepted by the churches of Rome or Africa. At the close of the third century, the canon, with doubts about Hebrews, was received as we have it now throughout the Latin Church. Perhaps, I may now skip the history to the time of Luther. Erasmus,

one of the fathers of the Reformation, and certainly one of the most pious and learned men of his age, rejects the Hebrews, 2 Peter, and Revelation; and Luther himself set aside Hebrews, Jude, and called St. James's Epistle an Epistle of straw; an opinion in which I cannot agree with him.

53. Now please to open your Prayer-books at the Sixth Article, which is about Holy Scripture. If you will read it over carefully, you will see Holy Scripture is not defined. For it is said to consist of those books about which there has never been any doubt in the Church (which are those books?); and then mark! the whole of the Apocryphal books are cited, and then comes a general assertion that we receive them all as canonical —a distinction being drawn apparently between Holy Scripture and Canonical Scripture; but what the distinction is nobody seems to know. We cannot avoid the conclusion that the framers of our Articles intended to leave a freedom of judgment, on a point upon which the greatest Continental Reformers were divided. This license the great writers of the Church have not availed themselves of, and hence the false and superstitious colouring of popular theology, which has created such confusion since the Reformation, and given birth to such theories as the verbal inspiration or literal infallibility of the Bible.

54. My brethren, what is the moral of what I have now set before you? These things are not done in a

corner; they are set down in every class-book, they are known to every student; nay, they are written out in every college examination, no curate is allowed to be ignorant of them, and yet there is hardly a clergyman who will get up into the pulpit and say, to the great relief of thoughtful and educated persons, and even little children, who constantly find their parents out in teaching them what they do not believe themselves, that the Bible is not free from all taint of human error, and that for the simple reason that it was compiled by man. But do the clergy think they can any longer conceal this from the people? Why, the people know it already, they have no interest in ignoring it, the confession of it clears their minds and explains many a religious difficulty, sweeps away many a superstition, reveals many a bright and shining truth, and gives them many new and consolatory views of a previously obscured God.

55. Why then this terror of examining the Bible, at least as carefully as we examine other valuable books? Why this halting timidity, this fear of discovering the truth about the Bible or about anything else? People do not like to have their conclusions unsettled. People think that when a certain theory, *their* theory about the Bible, has been destroyed, all faith in the blessed words contained in the Bible must go with it; just as, at the time of the Reformation, when people denied the temporal power of the pope, some thought all religion must disappear with that dogma. Yet, religion was alive

before the dogma of Biblical Infallibility, and is likely to survive the dogma of Papal Infallibility.

Brethren, if a theory can be destroyed, it ought to be destroyed; the only value of a theory is, that it explains facts and corresponds to facts; if it does neither, however venerable, however seemingly entwined with precious truth, it is doomed—it must go.

The venerable character of a doctrine cannot save it when that doctrine is seen to be false. Idolatry was old enough, but idolatry was doomed. The whole church accepted for centuries, without question, the doctrine of Transubstantiation, but at the Reformation it was declared to be a lie. Time brought out that lie, and time is bringing out the truth about the Bible.

Well then, since, as I shall presently show, things have been found out in the Bible to be incorrect, and whole books have been proved to be untrustworthy in some respects, many people are getting alarmed, as if, when we began to remove cautiously the clay and the mud and the loose stones, we were going to destroy the precious jewel itself. If I have a real diamond here, do you think I am afraid to cleanse it, to rub it, to hold it up to the light of the sun? Why, what would happen? You would see every speck of dust that was upon it, but you would not ruin the diamond. So, if I hold this Book up to the most searching inquiry, what will happen? All that is human and fallible, all that is corrupt, will fall away in due time, and the truth of God will come out more pure and crystalline than ever, and we shall be the better for it.

56. I know a great many people who say, 'We believe all this ourselves, but we cannot bear that our children should hear it.' I know people who have lost faith in verbal inspiration long ago; they know better themselves, and yet they want their children to be brought up in the faith they received and have had to unlearn, and so they have removed their children from churches where the doctrine of Biblical Infallibility was untaught. But reasonable opinions about the Bible are in the air; they are like floating seeds; you cannot control their flight. Shut them out at the front door, and they will float in by the window; sweep them from your dwelling, and they will spring up in your garden. The soil is prepared for them; they will alight, they will fructify. The working out of the truth goes on from age to age, you cannot stop it any more than King Canute in his royal chair could stop the waves of the sea. And if you teach your children a lie, and what you know to be a lie, your children will find you out in a few years, just as the people have found the clergy out; and do you think they will honour you for this—that knowing the truth, you kept it back from them, that believing yourself, you never tried to give them the best truth you knew, because you were afraid of it? Oh! do what is right and honest, be true to yourself, and leave the consequences to God. My brethren, the promise is unto you and to your children. It is better for you to acknowledge what is true, and abandon what is false. That is the way to make a beginning, and although you may not see very far or very clear, be sure that God will lead you on to

something better and higher as soon as you are ready for it.

57. Persons say, 'I don't like these new views. They were not taught in my time. I hate science and historical criticism, and all this so-called enlightenment, when it is applied to religious questions. I hate it when it is applied to the Bible, because, in fact, it brings my puny mind into collision with the mind of God.' Nothing of the kind. You are not doing this when you examine the Holy Scriptures, and ask who it is that has handed them down. You are not questioning God. You are examining the history and transmission of certain records. You are examining the form in which men have expressed Divine truths from age to age. You are not examining direct inspiration from God to you. People immediately think, when we speak of criticising the Bible, that we are going to examine some inspiration God has made directly to them, but it is not so; you are only examining a chain of evidence, the testimony of eye-witnesses, the authenticity of certain writings, which must be examined like other historical documents;—only that, and nothing more. I implore you to take reasonable views of the Bible. It is futile to believe in its infallibility; such a belief, logically carried out, must lead you into both immorality and error. I implore you, both young and old, children and parents, to consider what the Bible is, as reasonable beings, and not to injure the Bible by claiming for it what it nowhere claims for itself, and what it does not possess.

You do not enhance the value of a ruby by calling it an emerald, or by asserting that it possesses a genial warmth. You do not bring out the true value of gold by declaring that it is good to eat; and under no circumstances whatever is a good cause really strengthened by a bad argument, or established by a wrong assumption. Now, let us try honestly to understand what the Bible really is; we shall then see that its real value is not a thing about which there can be any reasonable dispute, and that real value is absolutely indestructible.

58. The Bible is not one book. Look at the index. You will see that the Bible consists of sixty-seven books. They were written by a great many different writers. Between the first and second portions there may have been an interval of 100 or 500 years, and so between the second and third, and so on, all written by different writers at sundry times, and in divers manners. These fragments are bound up in one book, and indeed there is very little connection between a great many of the fragments, except so far as, dealing with the religious history of man, they are records of the religious life of humanity.

Now, these records are valuable for two reasons: 1st, they represent to us the general levels of religious thought in different ages and countries; 2ndly, they indicate the spiritual elevation reached by individual minds, who may have been before or beyond the age in which they lived. But the religious revelations contained in the Bible are often so dimly perceived by the

very persons to whom they were made, that we find many imperfect accounts of God, and of His dealings with humanity. And although we seem to see the image of His moral perfections face to face in Christ Jesus, yet when we read some of the records of the Old Testament, we see Him through a glass darkly.

And yet there are people who decline to part with the most unworthy views of the Deity and His dealings with the world; nay, some obviously mistaken or partial view is often declared to be so inseparably bound up with the rest, that to touch the authority of any part is to sacrifice the whole. This is the usual panic cry, 'The whole Bible or nothing!' It sounds a very dreadful dilemma, but, after all, it is but a parrot-cry.

59. Let us face it calmly. We are told that to destroy a chapter or verse, a book or books of the Bible is to destroy the whole, either all is true or nothing is true. If the Bible were one book you could say that, but the Bible consists of many books, and therefore, each portion stands or falls by itself. You never think of applying the all or nothing theory to the history of the English. It would be too obviously absurd. Supposing Wolsey had never said, 'Had I but served my God with half the zeal I served my King, he would not in mine age have left me naked to mine enemies:' supposing Cardinal Wolsey had never said that at all; supposing somebody else had said it. What would you say? 'There never was such a person as Wolsey?' or would you not rather say, 'We have found out one of those in-

accuracies so common in history, we must correct it, not in order to damage, but to increase the value and trustworthiness of history. Certain things did not happen, or did not happen as they were described to have happened, and it is well to know it. We accept the historical correction, but we do not deny the outlines of historical events, the substantial features of the men's lives, or the general drift of their characters; we do not deny all their utterances, only what we find to be untenable.'

Let us notice here, for our comfort, that if every line, or chapter, or book of the Bible that has ever been disputed, were simply dropped out and put away, we should still have a sublime body of truth which no sane person has ever ventured to doubt, and no critical inquiry has ever shaken.

60. But how do you know what is genuine and what is spurious? I will use no new simile; I will take an old one which I remember finding in one of Mr. Beecher's sermons.

Here are a number of phials. One is marked 'spirits of wine,' another, 'petroleum,' and then I come to one marked 'iodine' and so on. On opening the one marked 'iodine,' I find nothing but water. Do I therefore say that all the others contain nothing but water? No. I go and see; I examine them closely; and if I find that the others contain what I expected according to the labels, well and good. So with the Bible. If, after examining most reverently, most closely, what my fellow

creatures hand to me as the Word of God, I find it is not in some parts what it professes to be—not moral, not righteous—I am bound to reject it. And I shall be most happy in having discovered the error, whatever that error may be, and I shall tell other people about it, and listen to what they have to say in answer; and if they have nothing to say, I shall adhere to my opinion. Then you will ask, 'Don't you believe that God is speaking in the Bible?' That is just what I do believe. I don't believe that every chapter and every verse are inspired, but I do believe that the word of God is in the Bible, and that God is speaking to me in the Bible. St. Paul tells you, 'We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us.' At times there comes what we call a revelation, or a certain committal of truth to man, and the way in which that truth is presented and handed down from age to age depends on the individuals who have got hold of it. It is manifest that God, according to fixed and necessary laws of thought and intelligence, imparts divine truth. He cannot, or, at all events, does not communicate truth to the human mind faster than the mind is able to receive it. Would you have it otherwise? What would be the use of my teaching algebra to a boy who had not learned arithmetic? It is of no use to communicate to people who are not fit to understand it a perfect view of truth, and so our instalments are necessarily partial. That only means, that the human mind receives the everlasting truth in a partial manner; it does not mean that God makes so

much a partial commitment of the truth to man, as that the mind of man appropriates it imperfectly and by degrees. For instance, here we have four glasses, red, green, yellow, and blue. I put a white light in each, but you won't see it to be white,—you say there are red, green, yellow, and blue lights; yet it is not so. The glass is coloured, only the light is pure white; so of God, His light is always shining with a pure, bright light, but you only see it through different coloured mediums. A man who goes out with green spectacles sees everything around him green; and another man who goes out with blue spectacles, sees everything blue; and another man who goes out blind, sees nothing at all. Now the writers of the Bible saw different colours and degrees of truth, took in many cases different views, and set up different standards of morality. Sometimes the light was seen through the dull lens of ignorance; sometimes the coloured lens of passion or prejudice; sometimes it was hardly seen at all. And hence, to preach that the Bible is infallible is most dangerous to morals, and especially derogatory to the character of the Supreme Being, as we have now learned to believe in Him. Knowing the higher standard of morals of the New Testament, we are bound not to rest in any of the imperfect standards of righteousness set before us in the Old. 'Be ye perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect.' Understand this, and it is immediately seen to be quite beside the point, to talk about believing the Bible to be true or to be false; because the Bible is not simple, but complex—very highly

complex,—complex as the religious life of humanity itself.

61. In the Bible, there is not one standard but many standards. There is a progressive morality unfolded to you throughout it. There are primitive and childish views of God to be found there, which we cannot endorse without irreverence, because the world has outgrown them. The person who wrote down the story of Eden talks of the Almighty as of a man walking in the garden in the cool of the day,[1] smelling burnt meat[2] and resting after work,[3] and so forth. That is the expression of a simple age. It is a beautiful expression, but still it reflects a state of human culture that hardly exists in Europe at all. We could never bear to speak of God in that manner now. It would be irreverent in us to speak of God so, but it was not then; though we, like the ancients, have our partial views and our inadequate modes of thought and expression, yet is it vain to deny that in some things we have outgrown primeval man, and especially in our ideas about God.

But if the Old Testament presents us with inadequate views of God, it also fails to do justice to man. The Hebrew prophets, divine and far-reaching as were their utterances, were eminently sectarian. There was a good deal of genuine patriotism about them, but the great doctrine of the brotherhood of man—the very foundation of Christianity and the root of modern civilisation—was unknown to them. If our heart beats high at their

[1] Gen. iii. 8. [2] Gen. viii. 21. [3] Gen. ii. 2.

spirituality, we see at a glance their narrowness. They saw nothing good outside the Jewish nation, no other nation had even a right to individuality. Let them all bow down before Zion. What legislator was worth naming by the side of Moses? What warrior was equal to David? What philosopher equal to Solomon? What poet equal to either?

Between Isaiah, 690 B.C., and Jeremiah 620 B.C., came Solon; but what recognition do we find of the fact that God was caring for Greece, or had raised up any law-giver in that benighted country?

Between Zechariah 480 B.C. and Malachi 390 B.C. came the battle of Marathon, and the immortal sages, Plato and Socrates, but what did the Hebrew prophets know of Greek valour, or wisdom, or morality? Nothing.

Then again, if you believe in the infallibility of the Bible, there is no reason why you should not adopt practices from which a more enlightened morality revolts. You might be polygamists (Gen. xvi. 3, 4) or you might keep slaves, and under cover of so-called Divine law, beat your slaves almost to death (Exod. xxi. 20, 21). The morality of Moses was infinitely below the morality of the prophets, and the morality of the prophets below that of Jesus. There is a steady progression. Yes! It was from God, that hard Mosaic morality which permitted cruelty, but condemned murder. But what *in* it was from God? not the Mosaic *Rule*, but the *Divine principle*. The principle of humanity was revealed, *that* was from God; the poor application of it by Moses — perhaps the best the people could then

realise — *that* was human. So when we say Moses taught from God, we must understand the one sense in which this was true. God revealed to him principles, but the way in which these principles were to be applied, the rules and precepts built upon them, were determined by his own wisdom and the hardness of the people's hearts. Christ teaches this in set words: 'Moses (not God) for the hardness of your hearts' gave you such and such rules, 'But I say unto you' (Matt. xix. 8, 9). I want you to understand that we go on gathering in the truth from one age to another, though men may have but imperfectly reflected it in any particular age. Well, this process of development is photographed for us in the Bible, and its stages are photographed.

What, then, am I taking away from you when I explain this, and when I deny your right to beat your servants almost to death, although the Bible allowed the Jews to do so, or to have a great many wives, as David and Solomon had, who lived in a far less advanced and self-conscious state of society? I am merely taking away the rubbish, that you may build upon a better foundation; when that which is perfect is come, that which is in part shall be done away. Take God's jewels and set them in your crown, cast the husks, but not the pearls to the swine, and learn as you read to read with the heart, and not with the eyes only, and to try the spirits whether they be of God. So shall you find in the Bible what is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, and be thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

62. But you may answer, It is all very well to say, 'Read, mark, and learn,' but how am I to discriminate, if all is not good, if all is not true, if all is not profitable; how do I know that any is good, or true, or profitable; how do I know when God speaks in the Bible, and when it is only man's imperfect utterances? Why, how do we know when a man is a good man, or when he is a bad man? By bringing our common sense to bear upon the subject I should say; and if a man does not use his common sense, depend upon it, God will not give him any better wisdom to make use of. You ask me whether a man is a good man or a bad man? Well, does he do right? Is he a selfish man? Is he a brutal man? Is he a weak and indolent man? Does he never try to mend his ways? Does he know his faults and glory in them? Does he wantonly sacrifice others to himself? Is he exacting, ungrateful, and hard to his servants? Is he a liar? Does he never try to do his duty? Has he never found any duty to do? Does he never pray? Does he never realise, or try to realise the truths of his religion, such as it is? If he is such a man, then he is a bad man, you don't want a prophet to tell you that. Common sense tells you it; it is written, that he is a bad man, and there is an end of it.

And now, if I see a man anxious to know what he was sent into the world to do, anxious to do it, sensitive to the rights of others, tender to the feelings of others, cultivating the large philanthropy of Christ, and wearing, if need be, the thorny crown of Christ as his reward; if I see a man the channels of whose spirit lie open to the

eternal springs, who is often in the Holy Mount with God, and who brings down a glory upon his face to brighten the ways of earth, and comfort the forlorn and weary; if I notice that he is the same through evil report and good report, that he can be trusted, that he can be loved, then he is a good man;—why no one who knows thus much of him doubts that he is a good man. Now, apply this to the Bible. If goodness finds you out in life, goodness will find you out in the Bible. This is the very characteristic of the Word of God; it pierces, it cannot be passed by, 'it is sharper than any two-edged sword.'

63. But you shall test the Bible for yourself, it challenges you to test it. You shall discover its value for yourself. The Bible professes to do and to be certain things. Be content with that, and do not insist upon the Bible doing and being something which it never professes to do or to be.

Amongst other things, the Bible professes to give us a picture of human life; it professes to paint its attainments and its possibilities, its failures and its follies; it holds the real and the ideal before us that we may see ourselves and learn to mend our ways. Well, is it not true that humanity is sifted in the Bible, its tragedies played out, its moral pointed? The colours are all bright, as though laid on yesterday. Where shall I find a truer picture of folly, weakness, and wickedness than in the story of Ahab, the whining king, too weak even to sin until stirred up by a passionate and

reckless woman, and then taking weakly what had been wickedly won. There is something in that narrative which finds a man out. When we read of poor, struggling David who was always striving to get to God, yet kept back by his passions, there is something sympathetic in the whole story; it is our own story. Again the narrative finds you out, and you seem to understand at once the relations between David and God, because they are much the same as your own relations with your own conscience, which is God's voice within you. When, at last, the prophet Nathan comes and tells David the parable of a selfish man, and asks what shall be done to such a one, David says, 'He shall surely die;' and when the prophet answers, 'Thou art the man,' is David only condemned? Nay, you are condemned, I am condemned; the word of God is sharper than any two-edged sword, it has found us out! What is the word of God in the Bible or elsewhere, but this same voice of conscience crying, 'Thou art the man,' and convincing one after another of righteousness, and of judgment, and of sin? People talk about the Bible not being inspired; depend upon it, it is more inspired than some of you think; the Spirit is there, and the Spirit is elsewhere too, helping our infirmities, for God will not let us be. He is evermore plaguing the heart with many sore and terrible plagues, until, like a wearied dove, it returns and finds rest.

You will find the truth about yourselves in the Bible, it is written plain enough; he who runs may read. 'You are a people who honour me with your lips, but your

hearts are far from me.' Is not that true enough, every Sunday when you come here? It is as true to-day as it was three thousand years ago. The Word of God has found you out. The Psalms are full of such words, and other words besides, which are sweet and comforting and make us strong to suffer. 'I was in misery and He helped me; turn again then unto my rest, O my soul, for the Lord has rewarded thee: and why? Thou hast delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling.' There is something there that goes home to every heart. When a man has been taken out of great misery, nothing can destroy the spontaneous rising of the soul to God; you may prove what you can about the protoplasm of which his body is composed, you cannot silence the stirrings of the spirit within him.

Again, the Bible professes to know something about sin and the remedy for sin; it tells the wicked man that his soul is like a troubled sea; it tells the righteous man that he shall shine more and more unto the perfect day. It gives a man receipts for living which are to insure his happiness here and hereafter. Is it then so difficult to test its truth? How do we find out whether a receipt is good or bad? Why we try it.

Christ tells us 'it is more blessed to give than to receive,' but we are all for receiving; we say, 'Give, give!' but we ourselves are not for giving. We are thirsty to be rich, but Christ says that 'A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things that he possesseth.' Only here and there is a man who has

believed and acted upon Christ's advice, and he becomes happy, and men wonder; they say he is careless about gold; how can he be happy? he is so poor. Yes, but then he has the clue to happiness, he has learned to live for others as well as for himself, he has proved the words of Christ; he knows 'it is more blessed to give than to receive.'

Again, the Bible tells us that the clearest perception of what is best, the most glorious revelation of the divine is made only to those who are pure in the recesses of the heart: 'the pure in heart shall see God:' and men go about the world moaning for a new revelation, saying they cannot feel God, they have no clear ideas about right and wrong, no vivid enthusiasm for what is good, no joy in prayer; but then, they are sensual, they are liars, they are unjust, they are extortioners. But here and there a man has cleansed his hands from wickedness, and refrained his lips, so that they should speak no guile; he has prayed and striven after inward purification, and he has been rewarded with a clearness of vision vouchsafed to the 'pure in heart.' He has seen God.

Once for all, the Bible tells a man that, if he does the will of the Father, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God;' but men say, 'I will know first, and then I shall do;' but some duty lies near to your hand, why dream? do! God says *do*, and you shall know. And here and there a man walking by faith, and not by sight, *does* his duty humbly, prayerfully, and he finds, to his amazement, that his religious opinions settle

themselves; he begins to *know* of the doctrine; at all events, quite as much as he can understand, and more than he can practise: he has been delivered from doubt, from miserable uncertainty, from spiritual insensibility; simply by a receipt for living that he has found out in the Bible. And the Psalms and the Prophets, and the Gospels and the Epistles, are full of such blessed receipts. Let a man take and try them and hold his peace. 'Ho every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money, come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.'

And, let me remind you that no amount of criticism can deprive you of those life-receipts, those divine and practical truths, which constitute the real value of the Bible to us. We may prove what we like or what we can about the documents of which the Bible is composed, but the life-receipts are hung up out of the reach of criticism: and these are the soul's true Jacob's ladder; by these we climb up to God; once uttered they are uttered for all time, and they are true, experimentally true, for all time: the promise is to you and to your children, the banquet is spread, 'And the Spirit and the Bride say, Come!'

Seventh Discourse.

ON THE 'DOCTRINE' OF THE BIBLE.

DELIVERED APRIL 28, 1867.

I SHALL say a few words this morning on the meaning of the word 'doctrine,' as it is commonly used in the New Testament in such passages as these: 'That they may adorn the *doctrine* of God our Saviour in all things.' I think that we shall clear our minds about the essentials and non-essentials of belief, if we can once be got to accept the Biblical meaning and significance of this theologically vexed and tortured word.

When we ask what Christian doctrine a man teaches, we are apt to be told, the doctrine of the Trinity, or the Divinity of Christ, or Baptismal Regeneration. In short, some intellectual proposition, true or relatively true, is offered us as Christian doctrine.

But if you asked Paul what his doctrine was, he would not refer you to the Trinity or the Incarnation,

although both these dogmas can be got out of his epistles, but to certain practical duties. Observe that in his view, the preaching of Christ and the preaching of a holy life were never separated; he did not teach doctrine and practice, his doctrine was practice.

For instance, in the verse referred to above he is speaking to servants, the doctrine of God our Saviour to them was not to purloin; the doctrine of Christ to all men was, v. 12, 'denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, living soberly,' &c.

The word 'doctrine' occurs, 1 Tim. iv. 1; here it means, false doctrine. What is that? iv. 2, 'Speaking lies, having the conscience seared with a hot iron.'

Who are they who act contrary to 'sound doctrine?' 1 Tim. i. 10, 'Whoremongers, perjured persons.'

65. The kind of faith, then, according to Paul, which saves a man, is not a faith which leads a man's head always right; but one which leads his heart. A man may believe right and act wrong. A man may believe wrong and act right; but of these two cases there can be no doubt which Paul would have called the case of 'saving faith,' *i.e.* the man who believed wrong and acted right. Therefore, make the distinction between head-belief and heart-belief.

To hold intellectual error is always a misfortune, not always a fault. To hold moral error is to have a corrupt heart, a conscience seared with a hot iron. To be wrong-headed is venial. To be wrong-hearted is fatal. Nothing can be more mischievous than to

suppose that salvation depends upon an entirely correct intellectual belief. Intellectual unbelief alone never damned a man. Intellectual belief alone never saved a man.

Observe now the different measures of severity applied by Paul to intellectual error and moral error.

Intellectual error, 1 Cor. xv. 12. There were men at Corinth within the Christian Church, calling themselves and living like Christian people, who denied the physical resurrection of Christ. We should have called them Socinians, or some other nickname, and turned them out of the Church.

St. Paul does not even deny their right to consider themselves good Christians! He did not think intellectual doubt to be a sin; if a man in doubt or in error was still walking in the footsteps of Christ and living as a Christian should, that was enough for fellowship, for communion; he was one in heart with Paul. Was his belief wrong? Paul would sit down and argue the matter quietly, try and see his difficulties about the resurrection, respect his own convictions and their grounds, but never dream of casting his brother out of the Church, because of some intellectual difference between them, because the proofs which seemed valid to him, Paul, did not seem valid to some of his converts, who were still his converts, if they reproduced the Christian life, whatever they might believe about the physical resurrection.

1 Cor. xv. 12, 'Now, if Christ be preached that He rose from the dead, how say some of you that there is

no resurrection?[1] But if there is no resurrection, then is Christ not raised.'

The tone of moderation is striking. Now contrast it with the tone assumed 1 Cor. v. 5–13, where he is dealing with moral error. Paul gives this man no quarter at all, 'He delivers him to Satan.' He turns him out of the company of Christians. This man had perhaps never doubted the resurrection, or any other doctrine, but he had done worse; he was an open deliberate whoremonger: he was an unnatural offender of the deepest dye.

In one place, Paul says that, 1 Tim. v. 8, if a man does not provide for his own house he has denied the faith and is worse than an infidel.

Now, what does this amount to? This; a man who neglects his family duties is worse than a man who denies the Christian faith; in other words, it is better for you to disbelieve the Christian faith intellectually, than to be a bad husband and a bad father.

Christ teaches similarly when, Matt. xii. 31, He says that disbelief, and even abuse of Himself as the Son of Man, shall be forgiven; but resistance to the Holy Ghost, the action of God's Spirit on the heart, was unpardonable: the one might be an intellectual mistake, the other must be a moral vice.

66. What then, it may be asked, is the use of a true intellectual belief? What effect, if any, has it on the life;

[1] N.B. An *after life* is not here denied by the objector, but the resurrection of the *body*.

what is the connection between head-belief and heart-belief? It has been said above that a man with a wrong belief may yet act right, but it was not said that he acted rightly because of his wrong belief. The fact is nobody is all wrong in their belief, and what they do right is in consequence of what is right, not in consequence of what is wrong, in their belief; the more wrong it is, the more hindrances there are to the right elements of their belief triumphing; but they will often triumph, because the heart which is always hungry for truth seizes upon it and assimilates it. A good Mahomedan is not good because he does not believe in the supreme revelation of God in Christ; but because he holds there is one God, and he is right there. There is a great deal of religion to be got out of that truth when the heart has appropriated it. A little truth will often paralyse a good deal of error; and that is why we constantly see people who are better than their creed. Good Roman Catholics are not so because they believe in the Virgin, and conjuring performed at the high altar, but because they believe in the love of God, the life of Christ, and the power of the Holy Spirit; and there is enough there to paralyse a pretty considerable amount of error. Thus, it is the heart, not the head, that lives upon truth; it is the heart that drives us the right way, when the head is often busied in providing obstacles to our progress.

I see a ship upon the sea, it is going against the tide, its sails are spread, but the wind does not fill them; it is blowing hard against them, and yet the vessel makes

way. What is the secret? Why, it is a steam-vessel—the tides and the winds are mighty, but the power of steam is mightier. The heart is God's steam-power, and speeds the vessel of our life to the eternal shore, despite the winds and tides of intellectual error. Again, then, it is asked, is intellectual error so dangerous a thing in itself, seeing that it is so constantly counteracted in individuals?—in individuals, yes; but what becomes of communities? It is the community that suffers from intellectual error, whilst an individual here and there escapes. It is the community who are constantly drawing moral vice from intellectual error, whilst individuals are saved in spite of their error. If every man acted out his error logically, then intellectual error would become moral error at every step; but there is this difference between individuals and masses—individuals are often illogical, masses are always logical. If there is something wrong in a belief, it comes out in blots on the mass; nine are smitten, although the tenth may escape.

67. A good woman believes her priest can loose her from sin, and practises auricular confession. She is a good woman, keeps her conscience pure towards God, does not mean to deceive herself, and is no worse for confessing. But how does auricular confession act on the mass of people? It breeds the popular conviction, that if you can induce your priest to utter a shibboleth you are loosed at that moment from sin; and so you esteem sin lightly, which can be so lightly

removed, and your conscience gets at last 'seared with a hot iron.'

In the face of this effect on the masses, it is no answer to point to one or another good person who continues to practise confession. The poison need not be everywhere visible; but, if it is working in the system, it may appear anywhere at any moment, and corrupt what has hitherto been sound.

Intellectual error, then, is dangerous, because it is just so much poison working in a mass of men; many hearts are sure to be tainted, and none are safe.

68. From what has been said, we conclude two things: First. It is very important to get out of the head something which is false. Secondly. It is most important to get into the heart something that is true.

Finally. How are we to get a saving faith? We would fain believe. Must it be all or nothing? The golden rule is: 'Believe what you can, but be sure you believe that with the belief of faith, that is, with your heart.' Some find no difficulty in adopting any belief prevalent in their sect or religious body; others are very different. Different minds are constituted to believe different portions of truth—we believe different truths, and different amounts of truth at different ages. Many young men are largely sceptical at twenty-five; ask them at such a time to swallow the Bible and Prayer-book whole, and you will make them wholly sceptical. But most believe something; and to believe that something, however small, with the whole heart, is worth

more than to accept all the articles of the Christian faith with the head alone.

Our rule of faith, then, is extremely simple. We only ask you to believe what you profess to believe. If you do not believe the Trinity now, or the divinity of Christ now, lay it aside for a time, and live on what you do believe; let us say, the love of God for man, or the power of a Divine Spirit over the human heart; or the duties of family and social life, or the necessity of speaking the truth, and exercising a certain control over the animal nature within. We maintain that every man has some kind of a belief of a religious nature that he can heartily endorse. Well, almost any point is good enough to start from, however far below the supreme altitude of an enlightened faith.

But it is asked, is such a fragment of faith enough to save? Yes, it places a man in safety; it is enough for the present—it is enough, because it is all he can manage; he is accepted according to what he has, not according to what he has not.

But do I believe he will be left there? No; by-and-bye he will find something more to believe, and he will add it on; 'unto him that hath shall be given.' God develops our faith in strange ways. Faith grows by that it feeds on; make use of what you have got, and without doubt more will come—more conviction, higher conviction. It will not be forced down your throat; but it will grow upon you. Religious faith is a growth. Physical life is a growth; so is intellectual, so is spiritual. But the condition of growth is use, exercise; use what

you have got, keep your mind open, do no violence to your reason, keep your heart pure, and you may safely lay aside fears about not having a right faith, or not believing enough. You will grow as infallibly as the corn grows in summer. Even here, your light will begin to shine before men; you will begin to adorn Christ's doctrine in some things, and yonder, when the clouds roll away, you will see face to face; and being changed from glory to glory, you shall then 'adorn the doctrine of God your Saviour in all things.'

V.

THE ARTICLES.

ARGUMENT.

WE must understand the position of those who are dissatisfied with the Formularies of Faith. The Articles must be viewed historically, and the spirit must be read beneath the letter.

The doctrine of the Trinity is expressed in terms which have lost their emphasis—hence the doctrine has lost its hold over the modern mind. But the doctrine is so far from being incredible in itself that it is the only intelligible doctrine about God, and one which grows of necessity out of the constitution of the human mind.

The Trinity is then re-stated and declared to be highly rational, intelligible, and practical.

Original Sin is next discussed—the Article is quoted, and the same necessity for re-statement becomes apparent. Original sin would not have been so much contested had original righteousness been also duly proclaimed; both are truths of equal value.

Original Sin is then shown to be a truth of science and experience. Its important moral bearings are pointed out, and the rational method of treating the Articles is vindicated by the new life that is thus poured into them.

After a few preliminary remarks the ninth discourse deals with the Articles on 'Predestination' and 'The Church.' Predestination is an attempt to found an authoritative dogma upon a few obscure and to some extent contradictory phrases in St. Paul's Epistles. The whole question is seen to be properly outside the limits of the human mind, and therefore not well adapted for serious discussion.

The Article on the Church is dwelt upon as more likely to be a bond of union between Christians than any of the others. It reposes upon a few simple thoughts easily understood—appealing to the heart more than to the head—and might be assented to by all known sects of Christians in and out of the Church.

Its large statements are nowhere narrowed, its terms are loose even to vagueness, it seeks to bind men together, to include rather than exclude varieties of theological opinion. It is the herald note of the Church of the Future. The foundations of that Church are already laid in the common sense and common feelings of vast numbers of sincere, enlightened, and earnest people. Possible terms of union are not far to seek, they exist already in this and many other Churches. It should be the aim of a properly-constituted liberal Theology to explain these common terms, and prove that they are more Christian than the narrow forms of the East.

Eighth Discourse.

ON 'THE TRINITY,' AND 'ORIGINAL SIN.'

DELIVERED NOVEMBER 19, 1871.

I SPEAK to those this morning whose eyes are turned towards the future, to the young and to the thoughtful.

There will always be a number of persons perfectly well satisfied with things, as they are in the religious world, and in the political world of every age and country; but in transition periods like the present, in times of religious or political excitement, these are not the people who are most helpful to their age, who throw light upon perplexed questions, who bring peace to unquiet hearts.

We must try, my brethren, if we wish to see clear ourselves, or to help others in their moral and spiritual difficulties—we must try to put ourselves in the fore-front of the battle. We must even go out of our way to realise what the new difficulties, and the new doubts, and the new perplexities are; even though we should

not always have a solution to offer, should not always be able even to sympathise.

In my first address I tried to point out the landmarks of an enlightened theology. When we were looking about for some guiding star to throw light upon the darkness of the theological world, and irradiate the gloom of the human spirit in these days; what was the star which rose before us? It was the Love of Truth. I said if we were ever again to see clearly in theological matters; if we were ever again to recast our theology, and make it definite and practical, as it was definite and practical to the first ages of Christianity; then we must no longer ignore the great principle of truth, which has been so long forgotten. It is a strange thing to say with reference to the Christian religion, but it is a true thing, that it presents in its development—perhaps more than any other religion—the most abnormal indifference to truth. Jesus Christ was the Life and the Truth, and yet His followers seem to be distinguished for the absence of life or the absence of truth. There have been many forms of Christianity, where there has been a great deal of life and energy, but very little regard to truth; and there have been other forms of Christianity, where there has been a great deal of dry, hard, dogmatic truth, and very little life. In the present day there is a great deal of religious enthusiasm abroad, there is much life. Never was a time when there were so many religious sects in England, in Europe, in America; and yet, there is, for all that, a great neglect of the first principles of fair

argument, the first principles of truth. That tendency dates far back from the very early days of the faith. In the first century there were numbers of lying biographies of Christ, and to these biographies St. Luke alludes. The first three centuries were full of myths about Christ and His disciples; as time went on, more and more fables were accumulated, and began to circle round the saints and bishops, till at last Rome found herself in the possession of a vast mythology, which, like every mythology, had some little substratum of truth in it; and then came one great reaction in favour of truth at the time of the Reformation, on which we have been living complacently ever since; and in our complacency we have once more grown as indifferent to truth as ever, and once more the voices of a new Reformation are sounding in our ears; and the sleepers will have to awake from the deep slumber of their decided opinions; but still they prefer their dream, they are closing their eyes to what they call the new and misguiding lights of the age; they refuse to hear the truth when it interferes with their preconceived notions of religion; they won't let it interfere with their comfort; they won't let it interfere with their interests; they won't let it interfere with their settled opinions.

Ah! There is nothing so stolid or immovable as opinions that have lived too long.

70. We are then, in our nineteenth-century pilgrimage, to take the love of truth as our guide, and we shall then find that out of the principles of historical criticism, the

principles of scientific discovery, and the principles generally of an enlightened intelligence, recognising alike the facts of the physical and of the spiritual world, there will spring up necessarily for the Church of the Future, for the new and living branch of the Christian Church, both a doctrine of belief and a doctrine of practice.

It is with a doctrine of belief in connection with the Articles, that I am concerned in this and the following address.

Now, when you read the Articles of Belief in the Prayer-book what strikes you? This. Here are doubtless a number of most important and saving truths, but when we read these definitions of them they do not seem to make much impression upon us—nothing sounds more concise and nothing more dry, nothing less likely to bring forth in us the fruits of righteousness. Perhaps, something else strikes you about the Articles, that, although so concise, you cannot understand them; and when you do understand them, you don't see what practical bearing they are to have upon your life. And yet, my brethren, these Creeds and these Articles were once full of practical bearing; they were fought over, they were suffered for, they were died for; and in order that you may understand this you must ask patiently, What is it that gave them life? Why did they mean so much once? and why do they mean so little now? You will find an answer to these questions if you will be guided by the principles of truth, as applied to historical criticism. History will point out to you that the circum-

stances under which the Creeds and Articles were first promulgated—that the habits and minds of the people—their language, and the general influences of the various epochs out of which our theology, represented by Creeds and Articles, at first grew—were all widely different from anything which we are accustomed to or familiar with now. Remember always, if truth is to be living it must be expressed in the forms of the period it is designed to influence. In other words, truth must be re-stated again and again. This, I think, is the great distinction between the old Broad Church of Maurice and the new Broad Church under his followers. Maurice could not bear a re-statement; he thought the old forms too sacred for paraphrase. We are beginning to see now that a re-statement is the only thing likely to save the old forms themselves from final neglect. Truth is always passing out of living doctrine into dead dogma; but then, again, it is, with a certain conservation of moral force, always passing back through restatement out of dead dogma into living doctrine. It won't do for you to go and read old books of theology if you want living truth. A lady came to me the other day, very angry at something which I had said about David, and after a little conversation, she exclaimed, 'Well, I can't answer your arguments, but I have got a book at home which proves that you are quite wrong; it is Bishop Horne "On the Psalms."' I replied, 'Dear madam, Bishop Horne's premises are not mine, nor will his arguments solve difficulties which never occurred to him.' If our new theology is worth anything, it must oppose a new

front to circumstances that are new, it must be capable of being expressed in modern terms; and, therefore, the Church of the Future will take our Forms, our Creeds, our Articles, our Ceremonies, and sound them to their very depths; and when it has found something that will not hold water, it will cast it aside in the cause of truth, and when it has found something expressed in the theology of a past age that will hold water, it will take it and change its form, expressing it in a way that will meet present wants and capacities.

71. I will briefly illustrate what I mean, by taking the first Article of our Church—I allude to the Article on the Trinity. Perhaps I may ask some of you to open your Prayer-books, and look at that Article on the Trinity, and try to find out how it is that although dealing with the most sublime subjects, it fails to kindle very much conviction or enthusiasm in your heart? I will show that this Article is really expressed in words which convey very little meaning to us Westerns in the nineteenth century. I will call to your minds a fact which you too often forget, that our popular theology is not a theology directly coming in living authority from Jesus Christ, or from the Old and New Testaments; but that we have seen our theological truth first through Greek eyes in the advanced schools of Alexandria, which flourished at the time of Christ; and secondly, through Latin eyes, the Roman being the main branch of the Western Church; and thirdly, through modern European eyes, including the eyes of the Reformed Churches,

and so many of our formularies and creeds, and theological terms, have in turn been translated out of the Greek, then into the Roman; and lastly, into the modern languages, including our own. It follows not unnaturally, that many of the terms we read, thinking we have got hold of the real thing expressed by the original words of the Greek, fail to express the original thought. The Latin, a more coarse tongue, lent itself imperfectly to the subtle Greek, and the English frequently lends itself not at all to either Greek or Latin. Add to this, that often when we actually do grasp the meaning of the words; when we succeed in mastering the subtlety of the Oriental and Greek metaphysics, we are scarcely repaid; the intended distinction seems to us unimportant, unproven, perhaps untrue.

Let us try and read part of this Article carefully, and that will, no doubt, illustrate my meaning better than any further introduction.

This is the first Article:—'*Of Faith in the Holy Trinity.* There is but one living and true God, everlasting, without body, parts, or passions; of infinite power, wisdom, and goodness; the Maker and Preserver of all things, both visible and invisible,' &c. Now observe these words. The living and true God is without 'body.' Substitute for 'body,' 'tangible existence,' *i.e.* an existence or being which can be recognised by the sense of touch. Substitute for 'parts,' 'portions.' Substitute for 'passion,' 'emotional forces.' Then read the Article thus:—

'The living and true God is without tangible existence,

without portions, without emotional forces; and yet He is of infinite power, wisdom, and goodness.' Although He is without body or parts, yet with power and wisdom; although without any emotional forces and passions, He is nevertheless the soul of goodness—He is goodness—He is love.

Now, my brethren, it is not too much to say that all our idea of goodness, of love, is inseparably connected with the emotional force, or what is meant here by 'passion.' Or, perhaps you will say I am giving a wrong meaning to this word 'passion.' Well, I merely take the word as it stands in the translation. 'Passion' signifies to our mind not only bad passion, but the power of being roused into emotional activity. There are noble passions, and we mentally in all our thoughts of Him attribute to God the noble passions, of which in human nature we see the faint reflections. Yet you see how little meaning the words I have read convey to our Western minds. I am not saying that they did not convey a meaning to the Greek mind. The Greeks were in the habit of using words without always connecting what *we* should recognise as a thought with them. They would draw distinctions sometimes without anything which we can feel to be a real distinction. They had a gift for phrases, and they would often pay themselves and others with phrases. The same is to some extent true of the Romans, but to nothing like the same extent; yet it has often been a matter of surprise to modern jurists how anyone could have been really convinced by the speeches of Demosthenes or Cicero; to

many they seem little more than masses of glittering verbiage and rhetorical exercise; and if it be here urged that the Greek and Latin of the creeds and ancient formularies are not the Greek of Demosthenes and the Latin of Cicero; it may be replied, No, they are later, much more artificial, and in every way much worse.

But all this playing with words and scholastic hair-splitting is utterly unreal to our modern Western minds. We insist upon having a meaning for every word, and having a real difference when there is a distinction. But I go on with the Article, and read: 'The Maker and Preserver of all things both visible and invisible.' We say then of God, that being without body, parts or passions, *i.e.* without any material points of contact with matter, He is nevertheless the Framer and Maker of all things visible and invisible. Then we say further in the Article:—

'And in unity of this Godhead there be three Persons, of one substance, power, and eternity.' Thus, although there are no parts or passions in God, the mind is called upon to realise that there are three Persons and one Substance, or underlying Something, which is without body or tangible existence.

Now, brethren, for my present purpose, it is unnecessary further to dwell on this Article as a form of words. I suppose you will agree that our minds fail to attach much definite meaning to it as it stands. There was, no doubt, some powerful meaning intended by the framers of this Article, which to them did not seem opposed to common sense. But they have not, as far as

I can see, been fortunate in their attempt to hand that meaning down to us.

72. Then cannot you see why you read this Article without gaining any emotional impetus? Simply, because so long as a statement is unintelligible, and without any points of intellectual contact for you, so long, and to that extent, must it remain inoperative upon the heart and understanding. That is a very simple truth, which we should hardly think of denying except in connection with theology! But theology is no exception. You say, 'Oh, but these are mysteries. We should not discuss religious mysteries.' Nay, my friends, we have nothing to do with mysteries here. God is, of course, a mystery. So is man. So is life and time, and everything else; we admit this freely; but we are dealing with a certain proposition about God directed to, intended to appeal to, and be grasped by the intellect.

Observe: You have here before you a statement. It is thought the statement could be intelligibly expressed, else what is the use of expressing it at all? Well, then, if it be so, the mind can take it in, otherwise it is worthless to me; it is neither true, nor false to me, it is valueless, as far as I am concerned; for it is as though it were not, so long as it stands outside me, so long as my mind cannot be made to take it in. This is not a case of an appeal made to the consciousness transcending the intellect, *that* is intelligible; but we have here an appeal made to the intellect which fails to reach the intellect at all.

73. Now, have I said, because I do not understand the doctrine of the Trinity as here stated, because my mind does not take it in, that therefore there is nothing in it? that there is no sense in which such a doctrine may be true? I said no such thing. Here, then, I come to the kernel of my discourse. Is it possible to lay hold of God through the doctrine of the Trinity? is it possible so to restate that doctrine as to clear away the difficulties which in its usual form it presents to the human understanding in the nineteenth century? I believe it is, and I will try to do it.

The first great difficulty usually put forward is the conception of three in one. If there are three things they are not one. How is this Trinity in Unity to be reconciled with the ordinary laws of thought? First, as regards the intellectual difficulty; it vanishes if you will consent to lift up your eyes and look about you. You are constantly recognising trinity in unity. It has been frequently shown that diversity in unity is one of the great principles of all life, certainly of all higher life. In almost every possible form of human thought you acknowledge a diversity in unity, often a trinity in unity; it reaches right through the whole constitution of the world. If I gaze upon yonder flaming lamp in front of me I know there is light, there is heat, and I see there is form, and yet the form is not the heat, and the heat is not the light, and the light is neither form nor heat; and yet these three together constitute the flame. You cannot take one away and leave the flame. These are its constituents. Here, these different qualities of light,

heat and form in physical things are one; there is trinity in unity. Throughout the living world there is this kind of diversity in unity. What is the lowest form of life? The lowest form of life is that pulp-like or gelatinous monad which is itself one organ, which organ fulfils all the limited functions of life. Go a little higher, and you find separate organs at work to fulfil separate functions of life, yet all combining to make one organism; and the complexity grows, the diversity in unity grows, as you ascend in the scale of being, through the animal creation, until you come to man, a highly complex being, having many diversities in unity within himself, but principally composed of one great trinity in unity, Body, Intellect, Spirit; or as Paul calls it Body, Soul, and Spirit. The body is not the thinking power—the mind—because when death comes, the body lies there stiff before you, a mass or bundle of fibres or atoms. The intellect is not the same as the body, because the body exists without the intellect. Then the intellect is not the same as the spirit. The calculating faculty by which you know that two and two make four, is not the same as that other faculty by which your soul acknowledges its feebleness and its poverty, and aspires to rise into a divine communion with the High and Holy One that inhabiteth eternity. You have within you a power which rises to God, and claims affinity with some lofty nature not your own; and that real sense of inspiration is something different from the calculating or intellectual faculty, or the physical senses, by which you perceive that fire burns or snow freezes.

Thus in you there is,—nay, *you* are as you live and move and have your being—you are, a Trinity in Unity. Now raise the principle from the platform of things seen and temporal to the sphere of things unseen and eternal; and is it so vast an assumption to say, the great laws of life which hold good as far as ever we can trace them in this world, extend also beyond it, that the things on earth are the patterns of the things in the heavens? If the known universe is penetrated with unity, and yet unimaginably glorious in its diversity, can that which underlies the whole be conceived of either as without variety or without unity? Is it so vast an assumption to say that the divine life is in harmony with all other life? When you once grasp the central principle of variety in unity, when you survey the vast array of facts in the known universe—facts in the animal kingdom, facts in the life of communities, facts involved in the very constitution of the human creature, body, mind, and spirit —I say, the doctrine of God's Trinity in Unity presents no difficulties at all.

But I will go a step further, and I will tell you, my brethren, that when I try to think of God at all, I can only think of Him as Trinity in Unity, and my mind actually refuses to entertain any other conception of God if I am to think of Him at all. I may say, 'I will not think of Him at all, because I cannot rightly formulate Him, because He stands outside the laws of my mind, and also outside the sphere of my human consciousness; we must leave Him in His impenetrable glory, dwelling alone in the 'pleroma,' that fulness of the unapproachable

life and light. Down with all our puny ideas of Him! Shame on the presumption of our irreverent thoughts! Can man know God? Can we ever hope to feel after Him and find Him? Never!' Yet, when you speak thus, the world will not listen or take heed. For has not every age been feeling after Him, has not many a heart in its own way found Him? Yes! Men have insisted on knowing God in spite of the philosophers, and rather than not draw near to Him they have immolated themselves in the search, they have brought Him down to them —they have invented the wildest rituals. You must, my brethren, by the constitution of your nature, cling to Him still. You must think of Him; you must aspire to Him. Invisible, unknowable as He is, you must yet have some conception of Him; and when that is the case, I maintain that you will, simply in obedience to the constitution of the human mind, think of Him as Trinity in Unity. How so? I will explain.

74. Our first idea of God is, that of a vast co-ordinating, perhaps impersonal force; at all events, an all-pervading energy of some kind, which brought into form what we call the universe of all created things. We may call this 'substance' theologically; we mean that unknown something which was the original inspirational ground of being. Well, let us suppose that to be our first rough notion of God—God, in the widest sense, the Father.

Then the next thought brings us a step nearer. The unknown origin of all, the All-Father, is thought of in relation to man. Here are we, men, women, children, sen-

tient, intelligent beings, all dependent upon something, all leaning on something, reaching after something not in ourselves, not in the world: thus, we are lifted up and taken out of the world in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye; all things seem to vanish into darkness, all save the soul and the bright glory that draws it upwards. Man seeks God, the source of his inmost life, but in that moment he feels that He is not far off, but near; and in that moment, when this impulse, intuition, consciousness, call it what you will, is upon him, what happens? Why, insensibly, irresistibly, permanently, he frames God after his own likeness. To us intellectually, sympathetically, God is perfect man. We call Him just, pure, mighty, loving; these are said to be His attributes, and these are human attributes. Almost before you have had time to analyse your thoughts then, you conceive God under the limitation of humanity. You cannot conceive of Him related to you in any other way. You may make those limitations as wide as ever you please, they will still be limitations, because your mind is limited, and you cannot intellectually transcend its inexorable limits. Very wide, is not illimitable; very great, is not infinite. You cannot conceive of the infinite, you may have a consciousness, as I have elsewhere shown at great length, but not a conception of it. What do you mean when you speak of the love of God? The magnified love of man. And when you speak of power? The magnified power of man. And when you speak of the intelligence of God? The magnified intelligence of man. And thus

God comes before you under a secondary aspect, cast in the form and found in the fashion of a man. I have often said, if we had no historical Christ at all, no one who had ever come forth as an expression of the Divine Mind, and as an expression of God under the limitations of humanity, we should be obliged to make a Christ, because our mind incarnates God in the form of Christ irresistibly and inevitably, whenever we bring definite thought to bear upon the question of a Divine Being in relation to man. And such a Christ, whether ideal or historical, will be God the Son.

But my Christ, where is my Christ? Is He only ideal? is He only in history? Then, in either case, He is far off, He is a conception to my mind; but all this time my soul is athirst for God, for the living God: no clear conception of Him will avail me if I cannot recruit my nature in Him, if I cannot meet with Him face to face, and be refreshed by communion with Him. Ah! in a bodily presence, that cannot be; the gross materialism of the Roman Catholic mass is but a parody of the Divine Presence you seek, and of the Divine Presence which you shall surely find, but how? Whenever you are in despondency, in weakness, in misery; when you are profoundly conscious of your infirmities, how shall you get refreshment from the presence of God? By an effluence, like that of radiance from flame, by the Spirit that comes forth from the Father and the Son—an effluence going into the soul, just as my thought pierces your brain, just as the feeling of human tenderness pierces your heart, subdues you, encircles you, melts you. So His radiant

Spirit-effluence subdues and pierces and melts. And that is the Holy Ghost.

75. Now, what have we arrived at? Let me beg you to observe the stages through which we have passed. I have first read to you a description of the doctrine of the Trinity, which was true to past generations, but which was unpractical to you, because our forms of thought and our ways of thinking about God have somewhat changed; but I have expressed to you substantially the same truth in the language of the nineteenth century. I have put it before you in the sort of shape in which your minds receive subjects every day through magazines, papers, leading articles, or books. I have, in other words, re-stated the doctrine of the Trinity, and brought it home to you in a form which can be tested and tried by the principle of the love of truth. If you use the doctrine as I have re-stated it, you will find it highly consolatory and helpful to you.

Are there not times when you cannot bear to think of God except as the Great formless Unseen? are there not other times when you long to draw near to Him, feeling that He is a man with a human heart, and that He is drawing you with cords of love? are there not other times when your mind revolts even at such a representation of God as that, and you say, 'I will not have a man for my God, but I will be alone with the Spirit'? So there comes to you through this doctrine 'grace for grace,' and God is 'all in all.' In the last spiritual analysis even the Son retires, and is subject to the Father, and God becomes all

in all. Sometimes a creative manifestation, THE FATHER; sometimes an incarnate manifestation, THE SON; sometimes an inspirational manifestation, the HOLY GHOST.

But if this exposition lays me open to the charge of Sabellianism; that is, the heresy of maintaining but one Person under three separate Manifestations, I have no objection to avoid that charge by identifying Manifestation with Personality, and admitting with Mr. Beecher, 'that although the class of beings with which we are familiar exist in unity; unity and diversity, so far as faculty is concerned, but unity without diverse personality; yet we are not to suppose that this exhausts all possible modes of being . . . . in the infinite complexity of the Divine Being, may easily be imagined to be not merely an agglomeration of faculties in one being but a range higher than this. So that beings shall be agglomerated in a Being, and that there shall be Personality grouped into Unity, just as in our own life complexity of faculties are grouped into unity.'[1]

76. But the Church of the Future is not likely to quibble over phrases, or even such subtle distinctions as Mr. Beecher here draws, with a view of evading the heresy of Sabellianism. By-and-bye we shall not be in such a mortal fright of heresy, because we shall gain a clearer insight into the limits of the human mind, and the imperfection of all human language. We shall perceive that the most correct theology can be no more than an approximation to truth, and consequently the most

[1] *The Trinity*, First Series.

definite language about God only an imperfect and partial attempt to express that which cannot be intellectually apprehended in its height and depth, and length and breadth; and must therefore for ever remain unuttered and unutterable, a consciousness, a life, a spirit. And this will come to us as time rolls on with a growing sense of peace and trust. It is just the attempt to define 'Person' and 'Substance' in relation to the Infinite God which has brought such confusion upon the Church; such terms supply a very poor and meagre expression for the great thought which is in our souls; indeed, they are hardly worth fighting about; we can conjure with them to any extent to evade this heresy and that, but it is poor work after all, merely a concession to dogmatic imbecility.

77. My dear friends, I have only time now to allude to one other Article—the Article on Original Sin. I shall recapitulate the substance of what I have said to-day and dwell further on the doctrinal basis of the Church of the Future in my next discourse.

As with the Trinity so with Original Sin, the words of the Articles have an anti-pathetic ring about them. It will be hardly necessary to read more than the opening sentence of the Article to show this :—

'Original sin standeth not in the following of Adam, (as the Pelagians do vainly talk);' I dare say, a good many persons here never heard of the Pelagians before; but of course, if they had to go through a preparatory theological training they would naturally become

acquainted with the Pelagians, the Nestorians, the Gnostic sects, and others who held opinions contrary to those professed by the Church of the period. Then the Article proceeds:—'but it is the fault and corruption of the nature of every man, that naturally is engendered of the offspring of Adam:'—there is the doctrine of Original Sin.

In these days, if we were to draw up Articles in accordance with present thoughts and feelings, we should have avoided all dogmatic assertions about Adam, because we should feel we were on dangerous ground; because even many sound theologians do not hold now to the letter of that story of the Apple in the garden of Eden; in short, a variety of different opinions are now held within the orthodox Church about the early chapters of Genesis. Then, we should not have alluded to the Pelagians at all, because few people now-a-days know or care anything about them. In short, they are left to the tender mercies of theologians, which are often-times cruel. And, then the Article goes on to explain how utterly corrupt and degraded we all are; not so much because we have done anything wrong, but because Adam did what was wrong.

78. Now I want to show you that there is a great deal of truth in all this, and yet, somehow, when it is so stated, it does not appear true to us—it does not bring home to us the consciousness of sin at all. And the matter being put so before men, they go about with a light heart, merely believing that the Article is overstated; they say,

we are not so bad as that; there may be a little taint of nature somewhere, so that a man may be said to be born with bad dispositions, but there is a good deal of natural righteousness about us after all, and Job knew this perfectly well, for when they told him he was a bad man and being punished for his sins, he said practically, 'I am not a bad man, I am a very good man, and I do not deserve this; although I may have my weaknesses I do not deserve all this trouble; it is useless for you to tell me that God is afflicting me because I am a wicked man; it is not so.' If you do not like my paraphrase, hear Job on his own righteousness (Job xxiii. 11): 'My foot hath held His steps, His way have I kept, and not declined, neither have I gone back from the commandment of His lips;' and to his accusers he replies: 'God forbid that I should justify you; till I die I will not remove my integrity from me; my righteousness I hold fast, I will not let it go' (Job xxvii. 5). There is something of that kind in the feelings of people whenever the charge of unlimited original corruption is brought against them; they have a consciousness, for instance, that God has blessed them with an equable temper, and inclined their hearts to good, and these things are in them natural qualities—birth qualities—an original righteousness—and much of their actual virtue has been only a spontaneous and natural pleasurable development of something which God has made in them originally good; and in many respects they are about as originally righteous as they are originally sinful. Now, I think it is simply because the Article takes no account of man's original righteousness

that we are unfortunately impressed with its teaching on Original Sin. Yet, if we state the same doctrine in a slightly altered form, our reasonable objections will vanish.

79. Am I denying original sin? am I denying this Article? On the contrary, I wish to show you how true it is.

Do you deny original sin? Look into the streets of this great city and tell me what are all these people so wan, so weary for, so masked and painted, so restless, or so pale and suffering? Is it merely physical and accidental disease? Is it not rather, in the vast majority of cases, some deep-seated moral disease—sin—an original tendency to sin, which has brought forth disease and which is bringing forth death? I say it is written in our streets, the original sin of man; the unbalanced nature of his passions, his unruly lusts, his primitive tendencies to headlong self-indulgence, have brought him to bitterness. It is true, there is blight in his nature.

I say, original sin is written in our thoroughfares, in our hospitals, in our shops, in all our public places, and in our private homes. This is why the rose fades out of the young cheek. This is why sweet laughter changes to the hollow sound as of wind whistling through a death's head. This is why the busy hands are feeble, 'and the keepers of the house tremble, and the strong men bow themselves, and the grinders cease, because they are few, and those that look out of the

windows are darkened, and the doors are shut in the streets when the sound of the grinding is low, and they rise up at the voice of a bird, and all the daughters of music are brought low.' Eccles. xii.

80. And this is not merely the assertion of theologians or old prophets. Ask Dr. Darwin to what he attributes half the misery of this world, he would tell you, 'I attribute it to original sin.' You reply, 'Oh, but Dr. Darwin is a scientific man. He does not believe in that sort of thing.' I tell you that is just the sort of thing which he does believe, and which he is incessantly preaching. He tells us those bad tendencies which you call sinful are inherited tendencies—inherited from your father and grandfather, and even their ancestors, and so down to the old Adam whoever he was, perhaps the Ascidian monster of whom we have heard so much. You carry in you the burden of past generations, you carry in you the taint of their original sin, in your members and in your mental tendencies and emotions, so that though I am not a stickler for dogmatic theology, yet I would affirm, and must affirm, that we are all suffering, not only from actual sin which we have committed, but from a certain original tendency to sin, for which we are personally not responsible.

81. Look into your own hearts; there is a proclivity towards evil. You know there is; and in quiet moments this comes flashing through your brain; and when you are perfectly happy, when there is nothing to disturb you,

when your heart is full, and the cup of health overflowing, at that time you are often most disposed to all kinds of iniquity and abnormal self-indulgence. These tendencies announce themselves to you, not always in the hour of adversity, but in the hour of prosperity.

Why will you be bad? Because you are not satisfied? No, but because you are satisfied: because you are so happy, therefore you will be wicked.

And now, brethren, it is a most solemn and practical reflection, that as tendencies are inherited from the past, so tendencies are transmitted to the future. You live in a moment, and what you do in a moment is for all time. Remember you do not only inherit, you transmit; and you do not only transmit to your children natural qualities but acquired qualities, and therefore this doctrine of original sin has a very practical bearing upon you. Through your children you rule posterity. You leave for good or evil indelible marks on the Universe. Supposing before your child is born, you managed to make yourself a better man, or a better woman; supposing before you enter into the marriage state, you actually do make yourselves better men and women, then you will transmit to another generation these better tendencies; but supposing you neglect this, and allow yourself to go on in unbridled lusts and passions, suppose you do not acquire habits of love, and truth, and self-control, then the child born to you will be born with so many tendencies against him. You have no right to lay the burden of your original sin upon him. See then, dear friends, how solemn a thing it is for you to enter

into the bonds of matrimony, and yet often how carelessly you do so. Ought you not to pause and ask, 'Am I worthy to be married, and to set a-going a new generation before I myself have become better?' Therefore this doctrine of original sin, looked upon with our modern light, by the light of science and experience, is a most valuable, searching, and true doctrine; profitable for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be thoroughly furnished for all good works.

These, my brethren, are the methods of the much-despised liberal theology, the theology which is said to be without positive doctrine, without moral discipline, without practical application, and without spiritual life.

Do you find in the Article on the Trinity, the light and heat which modern thought lends to it by a simple restatement? You do not. Do you find in the dry bones of original sin, the breathing humanity which is set before you in a full modern statement of man's weakness and sublimity? You do not. Accept the modern method which I have adopted—accept the love of truth as your inspiring principle, as your faithful though stern guide—and then—you who have found the spirit may let go the letter, and you who love the letter may take back the letter, and find it changed, and transfigured with a new spirit after the power of an endless life.

Ninth Discourse.

ON 'PREDESTINATION,' AND 'THE CHURCH.'

DELIVERED NOVEMBER 26, 1871.

YOU who are strong, or who think yourselves strong, ought to bear the infirmities of the weak; you must not be impatient with other people whose difficulties are not your difficulties. Some of you may have no idea when you speak of hating doctrinal sermons, of the extent to which many people's practical life depends on what we call doctrine. There are those who, if they are not sure what doctrine they do believe, cannot begin to live a good life, cannot, in other words, begin to build without a foundation, and therefore at a time when foundations are generally unsettled, we must try the restatement and resettlement of a great many questions, once thought beyond dispute.

Of course, those persons who have settled all such questions for themselves in the old way cannot understand the difficulties of a new age; and of course there must be in this assembly before me some who are naturally

enough impatient with anybody who attempts to restate or presumes to resettle a question which has once been stated or settled authoritatively. And yet every great reform or improvement in the Church or in the world has turned on this same restatement and resettlement of what was once held to be established truth. One political system has had to give way to another; one theory of political economy, finance, social order, art, science and mechanical invention, has been modified or superseded by another; and I am bound to add, looking at Heathenism and Judaism, Judaism and Roman Christianity, Roman Christianity and Protestant Christianity —I am bound to mark that established religious truth is no exception to the law of incessant change and modification; in a word, one form of religion has been superseded by another—one expression of religious truth by another. 'He taketh away the old that he may establish the new.'

83. It is easy to determine what men will not agree to, but it is not so easy to determine what men will agree to. It is quite certain, in the first place, that if a clergyman comes to an ordinarily well-educated man, to a man who has been taught to think and act for himself, and says to him, 'You must believe this or that doctrine because I, the clergyman, tell you to believe it, and I, the clergyman, tell you to believe it because it has been authoritatively so settled by the Church;'—if the clergyman is sanguine and simple enough to come with such a message to an intelligent man, the intelligent

man will say, 'Is that all?' and will turn upon his heel with something very much like a sneer. I do not say the man is justified in cutting the conversation so short; he might with great benefit to the clergyman continue it, but he does not like the way in which it begins; that is to say, he will not take his creed, or his doctrines, merely upon Church authority. He will tell the clergyman, and will tell him truly, 'You know we have heard all about authority, but that has been set aside by your own Church. Have you not put up the Bible against the authority of the Church of Rome? and thus proclaimed—although you did not mean to proclaim it—the right of private judgment to substitute one authority for another. If the doctrine you ask me to accept has been handed down, and taught simply upon the authority of the priest, as the spokesman of the Church—pardon me—but you must see on your own principles as a Protestant clergyman, that I cannot accept a doctrine merely on the authority of the priest.'

With those of our clergy who regard the Reformation as a misfortune, and sigh for an organic reunion with Rome, such arguing would of course be out of place. Logically, their theory of doctrine is identical with that of Rome, and as the keenest intellects the party ever possessed have admitted this by joining the Roman Church, it is not for us further to establish the position. We merely repeat that Church authority for any doctrine is hardly now considered equivalent to a proof that a doctrine is true.

84. But for Church authority Protestants have substituted Bible authority, and that is another and quite intelligible position. You love the Bible, and you say, 'If the doctrine can be proved out of the Bible, I will believe it to be true.' And when the clergyman, laying aside his Church authority, takes up his Bible and says, 'Well, I will prove this to you out of the Bible;' perhaps fewer intelligent people turn away from him, they know experimentally the preciousness of the Bible, and although they have not got very clear ideas of how it ought and how it ought not to be used, yet such is their reverence for it, that they will listen to the Bible when they will not hear the Church; but even then, when it turns out that the clergyman is not going to give them spiritual food, but has merely got some view about Hell or Election, which he is going to prove with texts, many turn away disappointed; they have a kind of misgiving that it will not do—that it is not to the point—that the Bible is less useful when used like that than in almost any other way.

And the instinct is a true one. We love the Bible, we believe that it does contain eternal truths, but when you speak of proving your doctrine with texts out of the Bible, we confess to a difficulty, for throughout the world every Christian sect appeals to the Bible, and in different hands the Bible can be made to prove all sorts of contrary doctrines. In short, the Bible is no longer the great instrument for the inculcation of the spiritual life, but the armoury out of which opposing sects choose weapons to fight each other with; therefore it is difficult

to see how you can settle doctrinal questions with texts. Almost every opinion has been proved and disproved over and over again out of the Bible.

And here Rome has really a strong position when she says, 'Because private interpretations of the Bible are twisted and contradictory, hear the Church's interpretation of Scripture, and abide by it; the Church of Rome's interpretation is alone infallible.' The reply to which is, 'We don't believe it. Every sect uses the Bible to serve its own turn, and to prove its own doctrine, and the Church of Rome does no more and no less.'

85. When, shall we hope to come to some agreement on the formularies of the Established Church of England, the Articles, and the Creeds? Well, what do we find to be true about them? We find that these formularies were partly founded on traditional authority, and partly on the Bible; therefore, I am afraid, when you speak to an intelligent inquirer, and tell him that he is to found his religion upon Creeds and Articles alone, simply because there are such things as Creeds and Articles, he will say, 'Why these are partly founded on an authority which I do not acknowledge, and partly on a method of treating the Bible which I dislike and repudiate.' Well, then, the Church, the Bible, and the Formularies seem to grow more and more insecure the more we look at them. What is to be done? Something is wanted to settle us, to re-settle us; what is wanted?

I reminded you in my last Address, that the first

thing needful to the theology of this age is the love of truth; no stable resettlement will come, unless that point first be settled. Then, when you have got that glowing light in your heart, you must neglect nothing—absolutely nothing—all things are yours. Tradition, and authority, and creeds, and articles, and the Bible, and interpretations of the Bible; but you must just bring the Lamp of the Love of Truth, and turn that in upon the creeds, and when persons appeal to the authority of tradition, you must say, 'Will your tradition bear the shining of the Lamp of Truth?' And when you turn that light upon the tangled mass of dogmatic theology, you will probably discover this. You will find, as the Reformers found 400 years ago, that some traditions will stand the test, whilst other traditions will not stand the test; and when you thus bring the ray of knowledge, the ray of experience, the ray of intuition, all which are different rays, which go to make up the great white Light of Truth—when you turn these rays upon any tradition, you will find whether that tradition will bear the only safe test which God has given you to try the spirits by. This may not be an easy task—nothing worth doing is easy: you may be able to help only a little towards it, others may have to labour, and you to enter into their labour; but the labour must be undertaken in every age, and gone through with. The truth about our theologies is certain to come out sooner or later, and those who can, ought to help it. You cannot stop the sun from shining by pulling down the blind, although you may sit in the dark yourself if

you like. Every age has something to part with, and something to win; we ought not to be afraid of doing either.

Well then, turning from tradition to the Bible; when you turn the Light of Truth upon the Bible, do you reject the Bible? No; that is the only intelligent way of receiving the Bible. For what do you do? You first try and ascertain what is the history of it. You find that it is a mass, and a very peculiar mass of records, as I have explained at length elsewhere; you find that different parts are authoritative in very different senses; you find that some parts are not authoritative at all, and do not profess to be. So then, the time is happily gone by, when, burning with indignation against Church authority, in a fit of Protestant enthusiasm you are called on to swallow the Bible whole; it will not do you good so. The records of the Bible must be looked upon by us with the truth-loving, God-fearing spirit. We must read our Bibles humbly, but intelligently, not blindly. We must not refuse to learn something about its history; we must be anxious not to receive any utterance in any of its records as the Word of God which, upon careful investigation by the best light we have got, is shown to be not the Word of God, but only the word of man. If religion is so important, we ought to take great care of our religious opinions; greater care as to the authority of records brought forward for our spiritual guidance; greater care in investigating these than in investigating anything else, just in proportion to the extreme importance of the subject matter which we have in hand.

Now bring the weight of the previous remarks to bear upon the Creeds and Articles of the Established Church. Last Sunday, you will remember, I tried to turn the Lamp of Truth, *i.e.*, the light of the best information which we have got, upon the doctrine of the Trinity, as stated in our Article. What was the result of that? The result of that was, I hope to a great many of you, most satisfactory. We pointed out two things: first, that when you read the Article on the Trinity in the Prayer Book, it left your mind perfectly cold, perfectly uninfluenced, because, on examination, we found that the terms used there to express this truth were so conceived in the metaphysics of a bygone age, that nine out of ten persons in our own age could not understand them. Therefore the heart remained untouched, it realised nothing but the sense of its own emptiness. But did we therefore come to the conclusion that the doctrine of the Trinity was itself in every sense a mere figment of theology? I think not. On the other hand, we found that this doctrine in its essence did not belong to the Christian religion alone, but to almost every religion in every age; that there was something in it at the bottom, which was apparently fundamental truth, if only that fundamental truth could be presented to the human mind in such a form that the mind could receive it; that the form of one age might not suit another: then, before the new age could lean on it, the doctrine of the Trinity would have to be re-presented or restated, in order to become living truth once more. So, in view of this necessity for restatement, we proceeded to point

out with reference to the Trinity how at times the human soul rose sympathetically into union with the Divine Spirit, the Indefinite, the almost impersonal 'Oversoul;' how at other times the mind revolted from the notion of such a diffused God, and felt the need of investing the Divine Being with human attributes; and at such times the human nature of God seemed to come forth and stand before us in Christ Jesus, whilst at other times He was withdrawn from us in the flesh, to reappear and abide with us for ever in the Spirit. Having thus placed the doctrine of the Trinity on what I may call an experimental basis, we discussed the doctrine of Original Sin, and we treated that from a similar point of view, and in the same practical manner.

86. But I am sorry to say that when we come to some of the other Thirty-nine Articles, it is very difficult to know what to do with them. Suppose, for instance, we take the Article on Predestination; it is rather difficult to know what to do with that Article. Let me read it to you, and then tell you how I think we ought to deal with it. I cannot too often beseech you to deal most tenderly and patiently with these forms of the past. You cannot do the Prayer-book or the Articles and Creeds justice, unless you look at them through the eyes of past generations. Remember, they have done an enormous amount of good; they have done their work, and they have also done a great deal of harm, and inflicted irreparable injuries on the religion of Christ. I think that any great good in this world is always accompanied

by a great deal of evil, and therefore I do not think that this is a fatal charge when brought against the Creeds and Articles, or other theological forms. No doubt they do partially express the truth. No doubt, to some extent, they are well-ordered attempts to express truth. We owe an immense deal to them, and we should regard them most thankfully, and treat them most considerately, even when we believe ourselves to have risen above them, and feel that we should not naturally express our theology in that sort of language.

Before I read some sentences of this Article on Predestination, let me remind you that it is founded on some words of St. Paul, and remember what St. Paul's epistles or letters were. They may be described as the utterances of a man thinking aloud to his friends, a man under high guidance and inspiration (although not miraculously preserved from error, as he takes care himself to inform you, 1 Cor. vii. 6, 25, 40). St. Paul's letters are his own glowing thoughts as they arose, often without order; often glancing along the surface, still oftener reaching deep down beneath it, but generally without any settled consistency; his letters differ, they are not always easy to reconcile with each other. Sometimes statements in the same page seem contradictory; yet this is as a man writes out of a full heart; the letters are not to be treated like legal documents, they are to be read lovingly and intelligently, like every other part of the Bible.

St. Paul, when he began to talk of predestination, got into some of the difficulties that everybody must get into

who talks about that subject. It clearly turns on matters that the human mind cannot in the least grasp, and no one was more aware of this than the apostle. How little could he have imagined that out of a few sentences which serve well enough to express his inability to cope with the question, we should proceed gravely to found an authoritative article of belief! Naturally and very obviously he contradicted himself, just as a man will constantly in writing a letter say, in trying to think out a subject, what is uppermost in his mind; and if you look over your friends' letters you will find they are full of inconsistencies, which are easily reconciled to you because you know the people; at the same time they are not always accurate statements of Truth. Doubtless, St. Paul would have been more guarded; would have striven after more rigid accuracy of thought and argument had he foreseen that at this age of the world we should be founding authoritative articles upon his religious utterances or diffuse meditations. But then we should have had something very different from the Epistles to the Corinthians, probably nothing half so real, so personal and pathetic.

The confusion and trouble which was to be expected from an attempt to treat St. Paul like a schoolman or logician has arrived. This Article on Predestination is founded upon some remarks in which the apostle tries to reconcile the foreknowledge of God with His goodness and justice. If He has willed some to be saved, and some to be damned, 'why does He yet find fault,' when men turn out vessels of wrath; ought He to have

allowed them to be born unless He intended to make them ultimately happy, were they all to be saved? Then we observe the inner conflict of the apostle's mind; at one time God wills some to be lost (Rom. ix. 18), at another, God wills all Israel to be saved (Rom. xi. 26), and Christ is said to be the Saviour of all men. But still, some people seem so very bad, so utterly alien from God, that it seems almost impossible that they should ever be saved; but St. Peter 'is very bold,' and affirms that it is not God's will that any should perish, and we may ask with St. Paul, 'who hath withstood His will?'

As far as texts go, there would seem as much reason to suppose that we are all predestined to be saved as that some are predestined to be lost. That being the state of St. Paul's and St. Peter's minds, I will read the first sentence of the Article on Predestination:—'Predestination to Life is the everlasting purpose of God, whereby (before the foundations of the world were laid) He hath constantly decreed by His counsel, secret to us, to deliver from curse and damnation those whom He hath chosen in Christ out of mankind, and to bring them by Christ to everlasting salvation, as vessels made to honour.' And then further on:—'As the godly consideration of Predestination, and our Election in Christ' ('our election;' of course, there are none here belonging to the number of the damned, we courteously assume *that*, when we speak of ourselves and our friends) 'is full of sweet, pleasant, and unspeakable comfort to godly persons,' &c. 'So, for curious and carnal persons, lacking

the Spirit of Christ, to have continually before their eyes the sentence of God's Predestination, is a most dangerous downfall, whereby the Devil doth thrust them either into desperation, or into wretchlessness of most unclean living, no less perilous than desperation.' So that in fact, brethren, you see that 'curious and carnal persons' have got to contemplate quietly all their lives the certainty of their own damnation, which has been predestined of course by God, so that they cannot help themselves. Exactly so; but then naturally, they are 'curious' as well as 'carnal' enough to want to know something about a question which so nearly concerns them as their damnation. If you were told that you would be amongst the number of those predestined to be damned for ever, you would be curious to know, for instance, how it was possible to reconcile this with the justice, and the love, and the mercy of God in which you have been taught to believe.

The fact is, the language of the whole Article belongs to an atmosphere of thought which has passed away, and which it is impossible to revive. We do not now talk in this strain of God, of heaven, and hell. The whole groundwork of expression has shifted. We cannot dispute about an Article of this kind, because we have got no common terms; its language lies outside our present forms of thought, and if I were to begin gravely to argue its positions, you would say I was wasting my time, and you would be quite right. Predestination is not anything you can deny or affirm, because it is a word indicating something or other entirely outside our

modern modes of thought. It is like those metaphysical discussions about the Procession of the Holy Ghost in the 'Filioque' clause which once exercised Christendom, and which now so astonish and perplex the intellects of our modern Westerns.

Try and imagine such language as is contained in this Article on Predestination, addressed by his Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury to his dear children in Christ: imagine him complacently telling them that those of them who were curious and carnal-minded would certainly be damned; that it was God's will, and they could not help it; and that this soothing reflection would probably hurry them into 'desperation,' and 'wretchlessness of unclean living.' This style of exhortation belongs to another age—an age of brutalising pastimes and pitiless cruelty—an age familiar with the horrors of the Inquisition. To such people even the language of Tertullian, descriptive of eternal torments, even the visions of Dante and the Last Judgment of Michael Angelo appeared highly edifying. 'When you are in heaven' the preacher might then say, 'you will be able to look down from your abode of bliss into hell, and see the damned writhing in the flames, and that will add the greatest intensity to your own happiness.' This mode of pulpit exhortation was not uncommon once, but it is language which can no longer be regarded as appropriate or effective—likely to convert sinners, or gladden the hearts of the righteous. We do not think of heaven as a place somewhere up in the clouds, where people sit and sing psalms for ever;

and rejoice in the contemplation of hell, as a sort of heated oven where the devil lives and undertakes to keep the damned in a perpetual state of torment. To people accustomed to derive pleasure from a variety of brutalising and bloody sports, familiar with continual acts of gross violence, and ever eager for the execution of heretics, such representations of a grand infernal *auto da fé* might possess attractions, but not for us.

Therefore, I repeat, that this Article on Predestination, whatever it may mean—and that is rather difficult to decide—reflects a state of civilisation which we have almost entirely outgrown. Its propositions are not easy for us to discuss at all, for they lie outside all our modern modes of thought, and its value, as far as we are concerned, is rather historical than doctrinal.

87. But now, if I pause for a moment, and try to think what kind of Articles are likely to be framed for the new, wide, regenerated Church of the Future, light begins to dawn upon me as my eye falls upon the 19th Article in our Prayer-book; that Article on the Church is much more the sort of thing which men are likely to agree to. It is to my mind the wisest of all the Articles because it goes less into detail than the rest, and represents a few large and intelligible principles which a vast number of people will be able to agree upon. Let me read this Article, and then see what hope rises out of it for the Church of the Future. The 19th Article:—'*Of the Church.*—The visible Church of Christ is a congregation of faithful men' ['faithful men' is not

defined; we are not told what a faithful man is], 'in the which the pure Word of God is preached' [the word 'pure' is not defined, 'Word' is not defined] 'and the Sacraments be duly administered' [the 'Sacraments,' we are not told here how many they are, nor are we told what constitutes 'duly'] 'according to Christ's ordinance' ['Christ's ordinance' is not further described here, that we might understand exactly what ordinance is referred to] 'in all those things that of necessity are requisite to the same' [we are not told what constitutes 'necessity,' and we are not told what makes it 'requisite']. Well, that is the wisest Article that was ever framed. It simply tells you the Church is a congregation of faithful men, in which the pure Word of God is preached. No details, no distinctions, no metaphysics at all. That is a way of stating the truth which any number of men might agree to.

And may we not get a hint from this Article for the Church of the Future? You will never induce a body of people honestly to agree to a number of theological details and definitions, however carefully drawn. It is out of the question; but you may get a body of people to feel alike upon certain great moral and spiritual subjects. What need have we of a number of definitions and details in the Church of the Future? Ah! if we want to draw men together, instead of thrusting them apart, we must take our stand on a very few moral principles and spiritual experiences. I do not sigh for a barren uniformity of teaching. I do not want to abolish sects. Sects will be always necessary. Different minds

will see parts, and different parts of truth; but as long as one man will allow another man to see another part, I have no objection to each taking his part, and stating it as strongly as he can, and then he will be in the best sense a sectarian. The position of sects in the Church of the Future will be this. They will be in accord instead of discord, they will be even more numerous than they are now, but they will nevertheless harmonise. They will be separate, but they will also be drawn together; they will be separate bodies divided on details —insisting on details, but agreeing substantially on moral principles and spiritual experiences. There is no reason why this should not be. Let us see how it may actually come to pass, let us examine more closely what basis our Church of the Future must have.

88. And as I proceed to do this, I have only to look around me at this moment, to look upon your faces, my brethren, to find a number of people already united unconsciously on the new basis which I have just now alluded to. You are already in the Church of the Future, you cannot help it, its life-breath is in the air you breathe, its dominion is over you. Do not the good meet the good across the sects? Is not the 'I believe,' which unites, more potent than the 'I deny,' which separates? Well, then, there is your common ground, there is your Church of the Future.

There are numbers of people all over the world—numbers of you who differ from each other on a great many details, but who would be willing to say, 'I

believe in God, I believe in a God ;' and yet, perhaps, none of these would accept his brother's definition of the word 'God.' Then let them say, 'I believe in God,' and let the teachers of the separate sects explain as best they can to their congregations what they mean by 'God.' They would all start from one point of contact—a fundamental belief in God. They would have to discuss points of detail after their own fashion, assisted by the best light which the age and the state of knowledge at the time could afford; but meanwhile the thoughts of the different congregations would be fixed on God, and that is the chief point.

Then there are numbers of you who would say, 'I believe in some sort of communion between man's spirit and its Maker. I believe, that as I am constituted a spiritual being, I am bound to be able to rise in my spirit to God. I believe that when I draw nigh unto Him He will draw nigh unto me;' but when you come to inquire into the details of that communion I say, 'Leave these to the sects.' Let them discuss prayer and its difficulties in their own way; let them give the best explanations of it they can; let them settle its uses for themselves; let them have their own forms of worship; let any man who can draw a certain number of people to a form of worship do so; meanwhile, all the sects will be united on the truth of the communion between God and man.

Lastly, I suppose by this time, with reference to Jesus Christ, if any one thing is clear this is clear—that you never will get everybody to explain such terms as

Divinity of Christ and Atonement of Christ in exactly the same sense. The more men think about the Person of Jesus, the less they seem able to define Him; they feel more than they can utter, and the most they can utter seems to be something below or beside what they mean. The very words Divine and Human become less distinct and palpable; so that when a man is asked, 'Is Christ God?' he may well reply, 'How God? can you define God, will two minds define Him alike? will they say where He begins, and where He ends, in what He consists? When God dwells in us, is He no more God but a part of man, or being man does He cease to be God? Is the breath of natural life other than God, is the breath of spiritual life other than God? Tell me what you mean, what intellectual conception you have formed of God, and then I will tell you whether I think Christ is God.'

One thing only is by this time proved—that the Person of Jesus Christ and the Work of Jesus Christ are, have been, and probably always will be, differently defined and variously interpreted, both within and without the pale of orthodoxy. Meanwhile, the Person of Christ and the Work of Christ remain: still He presents man in the image of God; still he presents God in the image of man; still he draws men to Him, and saves them from their sins by making them like Himself; or, as some theologians express it, with a twist, 'clothing them in His own righteousness.' Divine character, blessed life, soul-subduing, personal love; that is the common ground about Christ. Let the sects rear as many noble edi-

fices as they can upon these foundations; for 'other foundation can no man lay than that is laid—Christ Jesus.'

89. I confess, my brethren, when I place these three great grounds in their simplicity before you, and in their absence of detail, I seem to heave a great sigh of relief; I am freed from the incubus of a thousand forms; my spirit leaps towards the Church of the Future, I join hands with all the company of good men. When I see you believe in God, in the Divine communion, and in the ideal life of a Divine Saviour, I acknowledge that there is a basis of doctrine and of action for us all. There is a basis of doctrine for us in the belief about God, and in the belief about communion with Him; and there is a basis of action in the Divine life, which Jesus Christ lived out upon this earth. In these things I am joined to you, and I am joined to all Christian sects throughout the world. I will cling to these, they are sufficient. I do not want any other union; I do not sigh for an organic union of the Churches; I am content with a spiritual one. No man can put us asunder then, no Popes excommunicate, no Councils curse; for, taught by the Spirit, we shall all in different ways be led, we shall 'all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.'

There are men and women amongst us who decline to accept the orthodox ideas about Christ, and who reject our present formularies, yet who would rejoice in

the higher 'Unity' and the practical 'fulness' of which the apostle speaks. There are thousands living lives which might well put to shame professing Christians, and yet because you will force them to see through your theological spectacles, and define for them, instead of leaving them to define for themselves, they will turn their backs on the Church, and on every organised form of religion. But if in our Church of the Future we could some day have all the sects, and the people outside the sects, willing to meet upon certain broad grounds, and then willing to express their details and differences for themselves, I think it is not wholly visionary to look forward, as the years roll on, and the plan of God fulfils itself, to something like a unity of the spirit, a bond of peace and a righteousness of life, for which, in that great petition for all conditions of men, we in our troubled churches never cease to pray.

VI.

WORSHIP.

ARGUMENT.

IN Worship as in other matters principles are permanent, rules are transitory.

The Jewish Sabbath is obsolete. The Apostles, the Fathers, and the Reformers all maintained this.

At the Reformation the Lord's day became confounded with the Sabbath, and the Fourth Commandment wrongly applied to it.

But even Sabbatarians do not keep the Sabbath. Pseudo-Sabbatarianism falls lightly upon the rich, but heavily upon the poor.

What are the foundations of the Lord's day, and how it ought to be observed.

The special duties of Sunday are Rest, Worship, and Charity. The rights of Christian liberty must be asserted, but the consciences of weak brethren must be respected.

The Eleventh Discourse deals with the sphere of the Christian ministry. Sermons must be doctrinal and practical.

The false and the true conception of the clergyman. Let us understand what he is, and then we shall see what he ought to preach. He is bound to see the relation of thoughts, words, and deeds to morals. He is to uphold the spiritual side of life. All that has to do with moral and spiritual things concerns him. He is to judge you and your actions in relation to the heavenly spheres. Business, Idleness, Marriage, Celibacy, Pleasure, Education, Sacrifice—all these things concern him, because they belong to the moral and spiritual aspects of life.

Tenth Discourse.

ON THE LORD'S DAY.

DELIVERED JULY 30, 1871.

I SUPPOSE there is no subject which has been more often discussed than the subject of the Sabbath day, and the Lord's day. I suppose there are no two days which have been so hopelessly confounded together as Saturday, which is the seventh, or the Sabbath day, and Sunday, which is the first, or the Lord's day.

Now, at the outset, we must remember that rules for religious worship, rules about days, and months, and years, rules about seasons or ceremonies cannot possibly be of a permanent nature, because the rules laid down for one state of society and one nation are not at all likely to fit all states of society and all nations. What do you mean by a rule? You mean a systematic attempt to lay down a course of duty, founded upon a principle. Principles are permanent, rules are transitory. You may have the same principle at work in two different ages, and at work under different sets of

rules; but if you try always to apply rules which have been good for one age and country to every other age and country, you will very often end by violating the very principles which you desire to carry out.

Now to-day I shall try and show, as clearly as possible, what there is essentially transitory in the rules about the Sabbath day, and what there is permanent about that institution, which still lives on in our day of rest and worship, called the Lord's day.

And first, the old Jewish Sabbath has passed away entirely, as far as the letter is concerned. The day itself has passed, and the rules which regulated that day as a day of worship have also passed away. I will show that the Apostles believed that; that the Fathers of the Church taught and believed that; and then I should like further to show that the Sabbath day, or the seventh day, has never, as to its observance, been authoritatively transferred in the Bible to the first day; that there is no ground for your taking what you find said in the Bible—either in the Old Testament or in the New—about the Sabbath day, and fitting it on to the first day of the week. There has been no legitimate transference of its duties, or its ceremonies.

Then I propose to point out what the duties of the Lord's day—Sunday—are; and unfold to you, as best I can, the great principles of Worship and Rest, which we still enshrine and keep alive by going to church on Sundays.

91. Brethren, the Sabbath day has passed away. So

taught St. Paul. All you who have your Bibles in your hands can just open them at one or two places, and see for yourselves. Look at Romans, the 14th chapter, 5th and 6th verses: 'One man (says the apostle) esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind. He that regardeth the day, regardeth it to the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it.'

Now pass to Galatians, the 4th chapter, and 10th and 11th verses. 'Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years. I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain.'

St. Paul of course alludes to Jewish festivals, of which the Sabbatical years, the Sabbath days, and the new moons were examples.

Then turn to Colossians, 2nd chapter, 16th and 17th verses: 'Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath days; which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ.' That is to say, the rules you have are transitory rules, as applied to certain days and the manner of their observance, but they are shadows of things to come. 'The body'—that is, the more real observance—the better understanding—the spiritual living insight into the whole matter; 'the body—is of Christ.' Here I think you will see that St. Paul in his own mind separated entirely between the Jewish Sabbath—which he considered had passed away, and which we are constantly informed is identical with the Lord's day—and

the Lord's day, or first day of the week; which, as we shall see further on, he fully recognises as a day of worship.

92. Then I come to the early Church, and ask, 'Did not the Fathers of the Church believe that the Jewish Sabbath had been transferred to the first day of the week?' 'No! they did not;' for a great many of the early Christians kept both days; Saturday as a kind of honoured reminiscence of the Jewish Sabbath—or, according to some, as a kind of fast day, because Jesus Christ laid in the tomb on Saturday,—and Sunday, or the first day of the week, as a Christian festival, on account of the resurrection of Jesus. But when the early Christians met together on the first day of the week, they did not dream of taking the 4th Commandment, and putting that forward as prescribing an appropriate schedule of conduct for the religious observance of the first day.

Now I will read to you a passage from St. Cyril, Bishop of Jerusalem, in the year 345:—

'Turn thou not out of the way into Samaritanism or Judaism, for Jesus Christ hath redeemed thee; henceforth reject all observance of Sabbaths, and call not meats, which are really matters of indifference, common or unclean.'

Then I read from St. Jerome, A.D. 392. He says:—

'On the Lord's day (and this shows you the manner of its observance amongst the early Christians) they went to church, and returning from church they would apply themselves to their allotted works, and make gar-

ments for themselves and others;' so that the early Christians did not think it was absolutely wrong,' even to make garments for themselves and others on the Lord's day. It probably never entered their heads to think that it was wrong at all. There was no Sunday League in those days, and the only Sabbatarians were Jews. It is curious to observe that whilst the Christians have seldom converted the Jews, the Jews have converted modern Christians in whole sects to Sabbatarianism. But to return to the Fathers. 'The day,' says St. Jerome, 'is not a day of fasting, but the day is a day of joy; the Church has always considered it a day of joy, and none but heretics have thought otherwise.'

93. And now I am almost afraid to read you a passage from Luther, for fear of perplexing any weak brethren, who may have hitherto regarded Luther as a shining light. The language I am about to quote is certainly strong, it is just an example of that impulsive strength so peculiar to Luther, which made men say that his words were half battles, that they had hands and feet; indeed, they do march, and strive, and conquer as they go. He says: 'If anywhere the day (that is, the Lord's day—the first day) is made holy for the mere day's sake; if anywhere, anyone sets up its observance on a Jewish foundation, then I order you to work on it, to ride on it, to feast on it, to do anything to remove this encroachment on Christian liberty!'

You see at once that Luther has been driven to overstating his case, because it had been understated; because

men had set up the Lord's day as a Jewish Sabbath, therefore Luther casts off the yoke, and tramples it in the dust, in order to restore the balance of truth on the subject.

But turning our backs upon Luther, shall we not find comfort in the stricter practice of Calvin? Calvin will not be a whit behind Luther in Sabbath-breaking; for upon one occasion when good John Knox paid him a visit on Sunday afternoon, he found the holy man enjoying a game at bowls; and I have no doubt that John Knox in the innocence of his heart, took a turn at the bowls with the great Reformer, and that neither of these good and apostolic men were any the worse for it in body or soul.

94. I have said enough to show that the rules of the Sabbath were not transferred to the Lord's day, either by the Apostles, the early Fathers, or the chief Continental Reformers. The Lord's day and Sabbath day were regarded by them as absolutely distinct, if not antagonistic institutions. How did we come to confound one with the other? I think, by a very slight reference to history, it will be easy to explain how the confusion arose.

The Roman Church had a vast number of saints' days, fasts and festivals; indeed, so great was their number, that they were naturally enough neglected by the people at large; fine distinctions were not drawn, and so the Lord's day came in along with other holidays for general neglect as a day of rest and worship. And

even now, in what we call the unreformed countries, beyond the public services of the Church, little pains are taken to mark the day as anything more than a secular holiday, and to thousands it is not even that.

Now at the time of the Reformation we got rid of a great many saints' days, fasts and festivals, retaining only a few; but there was a strong desire to restore to its original position the Lord's day as a day of worship; and, therefore, the Reformers naturally looked about to find every possible argument to support a strict and rigid observance of the Lord's day; and most unfortunately, they selected the 4th Commandment, and put it into the services, and read it out in the ears of the congregation as an argument for keeping the Lord's day, or the first day, holy; and from that time dates all this confusion between the Sabbath and Sunday. Before that, I am not aware of any confusion in England between them. But since the Reformation we have had the Reformed Church setting up the Sabbath, and rehearsing this 4th Commandment in support of it, to the infinite confusion of religious, but thoughtful, people. And that continues to be done every Sunday.

95. Now, I believe that the Ten Commandments do substantially express, if properly explained in the ears of the people, sound moral rules for the conduct of life; and therefore I can have no objection to read them out and explain them as they ought to be explained and applied; but although I would read the 4th Commandment, which is a Jewish commandment, along with the

rest, I cannot tell Christian people that they are bound by every letter and every syllable of that 4th Commandment. Why, what senseless difficulties are we exposed to by such a practice? The Archbishop of Canterbury drives up here in his carriage to preach in this pulpit, and when the time comes for reading out the 4th Commandment, those that sit in the seat of the unlearned say, 'Why, see, here is the highest functionary of the English Church actually driving his cattle out on the Lord's day, and breaking the Sabbath day.' Observe the dilemma, either the Archbishop breaks the Sabbath day—which is absurd—or Sunday is not the Sabbath, in which case it is absurd to call it so.

96. But let us for a moment judge the Sabbatarian by his own standard. Does he, can he keep the Lord's day, Sabbatically? If he stands by the letter of the Sabbath, we have still no authority to impose it upon him—granted; but we have as little authority to let him off one jot or tittle of what he has imposed upon himself. Suppose then we charge him with violating the Sabbath. The Sabbatarians do not really keep the Sabbath. They do not even keep the Lord's day Sabbatically. They do not really abstain from unnecessary work. There is a distinction between necessary and unnecessary work in the minds of some religious people. They say, 'Of course the Archbishop must come here in his carriage, because he could not walk all the way;' so it is quite fair to say that necessary work may be done, but that unnecessary work may not be done. But the

distinction you are trying to set up is unpractical, it will not work; you cannot, you do not even attempt to work it. I look out of my window on a Sunday morning, and see smoke issuing from all the chimneys of all the houses down the street. What does that mean? It means that so much unnecessary work is being done by all the people in that street, according to the Jewish way of looking at things. It means, that many who do not absolutely need it for their health, are going to have their tea and coffee hot as usual, and they are going to make their cooks and other servants go through a good deal of unnecessary labour. Do you, or do you not, believe that the 4th Commandment applies to Sunday? If you do, you are condemned. No one can tell me that a number of healthy persons in this church absolutely need hot food on the Lord's day; the distinction between necessary and unnecessary work is not one you mean to keep, then you had better not make it. If you rest on Sunday, you had better rest on other grounds; and if you work, you had better work on other grounds. It is better to be true than to seem good.

97. But a Sabbatical observance of Sunday is carried out at other people's expense, not ours; it weighs most heavily upon the poor; it does not weigh upon the rich man. The rich man goes out of town on Saturday night to his country house, and as he is walking in his beautiful garden, enjoying the sweet air and the profusion of his flowers on Sunday afternoon, down comes the excursion train and speeds by at the bottom of his

well-watered grounds, and he turns up his eyes and says, 'See these Sabbath-breakers, see these reprobates going forth to spend their Sunday in the country, instead of listening to their City missionary in Paradise Row. Where do they expect to go to, how do they mean to be saved?' I know as well as you that there are evils connected with such excursions, that when men and women are in high spirits and without much self-control, a deal of mischief is sometimes the result. But I say, that if people are naturally prone to let their bad passions loose, they will be doubly and trebly prone to do so when you tell them they are a set of Sabbath-breakers, and deny to them, upon religious grounds, the healthy recreation which you can afford to take without going down into the country by an excursion train. Will you tell your poor brethren that they have no right to breathe the fresh air on the Lord's day, whilst you have the right to go into your garden? Besides, if people do happen to be by the sea-side enjoying the invigorating influences of the salt breezes, refreshing their weary minds and bodies, even if they do not enter a place of worship, is it impossible for them to lift up their hearts to God and ask Him to keep them from evil? In the course of a long day the excursionist may steal into some church or chapel, and numbers actually do; numbers, I say, who go down to Brighton are accused of breaking the Sabbath, but many of these people practically do go to church when they get to Brighton. This is perfectly well known to the clergy who are generally on the look out for the congregation, and take account of the sort of

people who turn into their churches on Sundays. They know that excursionists do not think it absolutely necessary to give up all religious duties because they avail themselves of a little wholesome change by the sea-side.

I say, then, that our Sabbatarian notions about the Lord's day oppress every one more or less. Now-a-days a Sabbatical cessation from secular work is impossible, and where possible, often inexpedient; and although such cessation hardly touches the idle classes, it presses heavily upon the industrial and the poor, who by it are not seldom deprived of the necessaries of life—health, and innocent recreation.

98. And now, brethren, I am longing to tell you how I think you ought to observe the Lord's day. We have seen sufficiently that it ought not to be observed like the Sabbath, and that it is impossible really to do so in the present day. But are we then to say that all traces of such a holy day have been swept away, and that there is no religious observance due to the Lord's day; that no work need be left undone, and that all the ordinary occupations should go on just as usual? Is that what I mean when I denounce, as St. Paul, as St. Cyril, as St. Jerome, as Luther, as Calvin denounced, the Sabbatical observance of the Lord's day? No, ten thousand times, no! What is the Lord's day? Whence its origin and authority? I will give you a definition of it. I say it is an institution analogous to the Sabbath, but not identical with the Sabbath; that is, it is something of the same kind of day as the Sabbath, but the rules of

the one do not apply to the other. It is analogous to the Sabbath, but not identical with it. And if you require any explanation of its authority, we may say with Dr. Hessey that it is 'of scriptural indication and of apostolical precedent;'—in other words, you find indications in the New Testament that the first day of the week was looked upon as a day of rest and worship, and you find that the apostles in the early Church actually did use it as a day of rest and worship. It is of scriptural indication and of apostolical precedent.

Then it remains for us to ask, what are our duties on the Lord's day, and upon what are those duties founded? I found the duties of the Lord's day upon the spirit, and not upon the letter. I found them upon certain principles in human nature, which are permanent and not transitory. I do not found them upon any arbitrary laws or ordinances of man, but upon that law and ordinance which is engraved upon his bodily and spiritual constitution, and written in the fleshly tablets of his heart. Our faith and our practice will then only be reasonable and beyond assault when it is based, not upon apostolical precedent, nor upon scriptural indication, nor external authority such as 'the laws of the Medes and Persians which do not alter,' but when it is based on the whole constitution of man, and has its roots deep down in the fundamental instincts of the human soul. Nobody can shake that ground; therefore that is the foundation for you to build upon.

Show me then that for the body, as constituted by God, rest is necessary, rest is sweet, rest is wholesome;

show me further that for your interests as spiritual beings you do require a certain time, a certain definite, periodical time, when you shall gather yourselves together, and when you shall, in obedience to the impulses of your higher nature, pour out your prayers to the Supreme Father; show me that the world has been improved by such an institution, that you are being supported by such an institution as this; show me that your faith is being kindled, that your religion is being made pure and vital; aye, that you are lifted up and comforted by these periodical public prayers and pulpit ministrations; then, I say, you have a sure and impregnable basis for the observance of the Lord's day, the first day of the week, as a day of rest and worship.

99. The duties, then, of the Lord's day are, first, rest for the body. In this fevered city, when men are toiling like slaves in a second Egypt, and building up mighty pyramids of wealth for themselves and others; in the heated controversies of the age, amidst pressing and fighting for high position, or for bare food and clothing in the struggle for existence, when the strong run together in the race, neck to neck, and when the weak wrestle with the strong, and are thrown and crushed, when forces seem drawn out to the highest degree of tension, when long hours consume the vital powers, and make even the young jaded and weary before their time —rest is sweet for the body. Therefore, use this Lord's day rest bountifully, as it is bountifully given you for your bodies. Depend upon this, if your bodies are

right, your minds and spirits will somehow or other have a tendency to come right; but if you dispense with rest for the body; if you say, for instance, 'I am bound by a duty to hurry off to church, though my eyes are heavy, and I shall sleep in my pew; but I will not stay at home, because I must, at all hazards, go to church on Sunday morning'—What is the use of that? You had better sleep a little longer. It is not the voice of the sluggard which tells you you had better sleep a little longer; it is the voice of Nature, it is the voice of God—sleep—'so He giveth His beloved sleep'—on the Day of Rest. If you cannot get up and go out without that prostrate weariness of body and a jaded feeling, then rest on your Sunday morn, and let not the church interfere with your Christian liberty. Say, 'When I am refreshed, when I have gathered up a portion of my exhausted energies, I will go and give my recreated strength to God, to God I will pour out my spirit, when I have got something to pour out, when there is some little animation and strength in me; but I will not go with a worn-out body, I will not give to God what is not fit for man, and then say, 'Oh! but I have done my duty to God.' You have not done your duty to God, because you have not done your duty to yourself. God is pleased when you take care of your precious body, and intellect, and spirit which He has given you; and do not suppose that in the exhaustion of body and mind you can be pleasing God by going through any mere outward observances. Rest then to the overworked men and women in this great city—a proclamation of

beneficent rest—goes forth with the dawning of the Lord's day, from One who made man, and knows what is in him.

100. Then, as regards worship. When we come together we ought to have something to say, we ought to have something and to feel something different from our private prayers, which are also good and indispensable to the religious life; still there is, when we meet together, sometimes a spirit there which is not with us when we are at home, and difficulties and perplexities are often cleared up in the great congregation that would never be cleared up by simply saying our prayers quietly alone. Conscience and private prayer;—people sometimes think that this is all that is needed for life and practice; but be sure of this, conscience may often go wrong, even when a man is good and prayerful, because he has got narrow, because he has considered himself, too much apart from his fellow-creatures. His private conscience wants to be guided and set right, and kept healthy by the public conscience. No man lives to himself, and no man dies to himself. Remember, then, that we are all bound up together—bound to help each other, and bound to enlighten each other—bound to bear one another's burdens. Many things—flashes of duty, new revelations of truth—come to you when you associate with those who are different from, if not wiser than yourselves, and when you bow down with a mixed multitude in prayer. The individual diseases of the mind are often corrected by the common act.

But indeed there seems often a quite peculiar power in public prayer and in public preaching, which comes not to the spirit through any other channel. I would you could look forward to the Lord's day as a day on which a more perfect light was sure to shine upon you. I would you could use your church as a comfort and a refuge, and say, 'I am now going up into the house of the Lord. I will join the prayers in no captious mood. I will go there to be taught by the Spirit. I will see what message comes to me from the preacher's lips, from the rolling anthem, from the hymn, from the chapter, or Psalm, or prayer.' So bring your troubles to God's house, my friends. Spread them out there before Him just as Hezekiah, when at his wit's end, spread his griefs out before the Lord. Ah! there are some in this church who have had their heavy burdens lifted. There are some upon whom the light has shined—who have been drawn nearer to God and nearer to man, and seen clear, and been comforted.

101. But public prayer suggests especially your failures of duty, your commissions of sin, your coldness, your want of heart; you find yourself condemned on the right hand and on the left. You know that you have to sit in church beside a sister with whom you have been quarrelling all the week; and are you not ashamed to come and ask God to forgive you your trespasses, when you do not mean to forgive your sister, and is not your sister ashamed, who does not mean to forgive you? You see in the opposite gallery your

deadly enemy. What a mockery of God, what a satire upon ourselves, is it for us human beings to be quarrelling with each other, and sitting on opposite sides of the same church, or sitting in the same pew, glaring at each other whilst our lips proclaim the Gospel of Peace, and we are professing to repent of our sins! What a self-revelation it is for people who constantly meet each other as they go down the gallery stairs of this church, or are innocently shown into the pew of some chronic foe! Then your tongues are bound, you cannot re-open the controversy,—not for two hours at least. You are bound to sit and listen to the same sermon, and the same melody of praise passes through your ears, perhaps the same prayers through your lips. Ah! shall not a common spirit rise out of all this? You who have a tender and beneficent Father, who takes you back again and again, and will not be wearied with your backslidings; you who have committed offences against your fellow-creatures, and want forgiveness; you whom this world's bickerings and this world's jealousies have put asunder; you whom a little selfish pride keeps asunder; you who will not be pardoned because you know you are in the wrong; you who will not pardon because you know you are in the right; you who are both so sad, because you are parted—because you have parted yourselves—draw near together once more; before the years divide you for ever, before the great river sweeps you to the sea, be reconciled. This also is the work of the Lord's day.

102. Lastly, I find that on the first day of the week

the early Christians made collections for those who were poorer than themselves. What does that mean? The Lord's day, and the communion of Christians in public prayer reminded them of the duty they owed to their fellow-creatures. Understand the spirit of this charity. It is not only giving sixpence to the poor, which often demoralises and corrupts them; it is not only putting your name to a subscription list, because somebody else does it; it is not only pretending to be generous and liberal out of your great wealth, and giving a little which seems to be a great deal to those who are much poorer than yourselves—that is not the meaning of the Lord's-day collections. The charity of the first Christians, those who were struggling together for life and death—the charity of those who are at any time bound together by the transcendent charity of Christ—is of a different description.

Common prayer reminds of common wants, common sufferings. Spend your money willingly, your time willingly, yourselves willingly; give, like Christ, not grudgingly and of necessity, but because you love. Oh, I do not think, when that spirit comes upon you, you will ask, 'How much am I to give?' because you will know how much more blessed it is to give than to receive, and you will get such a longing to be like Him who loved you, and gave Himself for you, which is almost the only thing worth longing for very much! Well then, let that charity be in you which was in Christ Jesus. If you have been wanting in it during the week, let the Lord's day remind you of it. How have you been treating

your fellow-creatures? Be more kind to them to-day, if you have been hard upon them in the week. You were anxious and worried, and they had to suffer for it. Give a kindly word to your servants, and those who are dependent on you. Go out of your way to do an act of gentleness, just to remind yourself of the great law that you are to 'love one another, even as Jesus Christ hath loved you.' Make collections certainly; give money certainly, if required; but remember how much better is the cup of cold water, given in the name of a disciple—better for the world, better for others, better for you—than a thousand pounds without love.

103. But when you have seized these great principles of rest, and worship, and love, and summed them up, and given them outward memorial in your Lord's-day duties, what becomes of all those questions of work or no work, or so much work? They have vanished. We have been looking at the great flowers in the garden of God; our senses are ravished with the perfume, our eyes are filled with the resplendent hues, we cannot stoop to pick up such tiny weeds. So let no man come and tell you, you shall not do this, you shall not read that book, you shall not write that letter, you shall not take that walk, you shall not play that game. All such rules are so many infringements on your Christian liberty. You have a perfect right to do this work, and to read this book, if it is not contrary to your enlightened conscience to do so, because you are not bound by the 4th Commandment; your commandment is a commandment of liberty and

love, and if you act in this spirit you are free, for you are not under the law, but under grace.

But let no man so use his liberty as to make it a cloke of maliciousness or an offence to others. Remember, you are not bound by the 4th Commandment, only because you are bound by something infinitely higher, more comprehensive, and more inexorably stringent than the law from Sinai. You are bound by the Sermon on the Mount. Your Christian liberty may not be limited by the 4th Commandment, but it is limited by the law of love. You are bound to be considerate; you are surrounded by those who have not been taught to think like you. They have their rough reading of the Lord's day. They shut up their shops and go to church; respectable public feeling agrees to pay tribute in that form to the principles of rest and worship. You have no right to advocate general buying and selling on Sunday, although you have a right to vindicate Christian liberty for the poor, who are often obliged to buy and sell the necessaries of life on Sunday morning. The common rule is good enough, but you must not make a Sunday rule pinch the poor. You have no right to advocate in England the opening of theatres and fairs on Sunday, you should plead for a discontinuance of labour; you should seek to reduce pursuits which tend to give the day a merely frivolous or even secular aspect; but you must not pinch the health and recreation of the poor, by forbidding excursion trains, or shutting up public gardens. It may be absolutely right for you to do many

things, but if you are with people who think what you do is wrong, unless you can enlighten their minds, it may be expedient for you to postpone your rights, it may be relatively wrong for you to use your liberty.

'All things are lawful, but all things are not expedient.'

St. Paul was a very clear-sighted man, but he was something better, he was a large-hearted man, he was not for going on all by himself, he was for helping others along with him. He did not believe much in the efficacy of external signs, but when he was with people who did, he shaved his head at Cenchrea 'because he had a vow.' He knew that an idol was nothing, and that therefore meat offered to an idol was nothing; but still, he was infinitely tender to others who were not so far advanced as himself; he was not going, by eating such accursed meat in their presence, to flaunt in their faces a knowledge which would seem to them mere impiety. Yet there are some of us who delight in doing this. We go to Scotland, for instance, where the people are mostly Sabbatarians, and we insult their religious prejudices by indulging in a variety of pursuits on what they call the 'Sabbath day,' which seem to them as impious as eating meat offered to idols seemed to some of the early Christians: we have no right to do this, our liberty is become a snare to us; if we cannot use it better we are not fit for it; we had better be under our schoolmaster the law again, we have not learned our lesson, we are not ripe for Christ: 'you are fools, I will do what I like, when what I like is not in itself wrong,' that is

the childish abuse of spiritual liberty, 'the cloke of maliciousness,' 'the stumbling-block.'

'Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend.' That is Christianity.

Eleventh Discourse.

ON PREACHING.

DELIVERED NOVEMBER 3, 1871.

YOU sometimes hear people complain of sermons because they are too doctrinal; they tell you that they do not want to hear about doctrine, they want to hear about practice. And then they go and hear a practical sermon, and they complain that the sermon was all morality, and they do not want to hear so much about practice as about doctrine; if you would only give them sound doctrine, they would find the practice out for themselves.

It is difficult to know what to do with people who are satisfied with neither doctrinal nor practical preaching; at the same time, no doubt, there is a great deal of truth in what they mean, if there is not much sense in what they say. You have got no right to preach doctrine to people, unless you can show that doctrine is in some way or other connected with the conduct of life. That is really what people mean when

they object to doctrine, and you have no right, as a Christian minister, believing in the spirit of Christianity as a great motive power of love—you have no right to tell people simply about right and wrong, without seeking to inspire them with the enthusiasm which comes only from the appropriation of deep spiritual principles; and that is what people mean when they say they do not like merely practical sermons.

One day a friend said to me, 'Have you ever been to hear Mr. Melville?' I said, 'Yes.' He said, 'He is a very evangelical preacher.' I said, 'Yes, very.' 'A very eloquent man.' 'Yes, very.' And then he said, 'You know, you never hear a sermon of Mr. Melville's without hearing right good sound Christian doctrine along with the eloquence; you hear,' continued my friend, 'a great deal about Jesus Christ and the atonement, and eternal punishment, and such-like wholesome and comforting truths; in short, in every sermon he preaches the cardinal doctrines of Christianity.' 'Well then,' I said, 'Mr. Melville certainly must be very sound;' and then I took down a volume and showed my friend a sermon of Mr. Melville's in which the name of Christ or Jesus did not once occur. It was a good long sermon, and very eloquent, but there was nothing in it about the atoning blood of Jesus Christ, or eternal damnation either. My friend was very much shocked, and did not think half so much of Mr. Melville after that. I know I have sometimes shocked people by pointing out to them that the word 'God' did not once occur in the Book of Esther, and although they did not like to say so they did

not think much of the Book of Esther after that. 'It is the letter which killeth, and the Spirit which giveth life.

105. We shall never be reasonable about preaching until we have got some notion of what preaching ought to be; and we shall never get a correct notion of that until we have made up our minds what the clergyman really is, and what ought to be expected from him as a religious teacher. I wish we all held reasonable views of the Christian ministry. I wish we understood its noble mission. I wish we apprehended it in its height, and depth, and breadth, and length. Above all, I wish we could know the full meaning of those words of St. Paul, when he tells us that, in his ministerial capacity, he does not want 'to have dominion over our faith,' he does not want to be a pope, or to impose his scheme of theology upon us; he wants to give us a good practical scheme of theology, and will do it if he can; but he wants above all to commend himself, in his teaching, to men's consciences in the sight of God, that so he may be 'a helper of their joy:' as a minister of Christ, as your servant for Christ's sake, he longs to help you on, to enlighten your mind, to rouse your courage, to give you sound, earnest grounds of action, which we are in the habit of calling Christian action, because the heat and power of it flows from Christ to the heart of man. So, my brethren, the Christian minister is nothing if he is not 'a helper of your joy; for by faith ye stand.'

Now laymen are often sufficiently jealous of the clergy. And this jealousy is in proportion to the

influence of the clergy. They do not see, they say, why men, who know no more than themselves, should be set over them 'to have dominion over their faith.' Now there would be no jealousy at all, no sense that the clergyman was meddling with what did not concern him, if the sphere of his ministry was first rightly understood and defined by himself, or by others.

106. There are two views of the clergy. One view supposes that the clergyman is one entrusted with miraculous powers and set over the people to lay down the law in a kind of dogmatic manner, and to have dominion over their faith, and to be the keeper of certain sacraments of enormous weight and moral consequence to their souls, which he can at his will impart or withhold. That is one view of the clerical office; and that is a most disastrous one, because it makes the clergy into a caste and cuts them off from their fellow-men. I can well understand reasonable people being very jealous of a set of men who are bound together by sacramental privileges, and who will insensibly, but inevitably, work for the authority of their class to maintain their special powers and prerogatives as against the laity. If you tell a man that he is one of a special class, that is to say, that his interests are separate from, if not opposed to, the interests of the mass of men amongst whom he ministers, if you teach him that he is entrusted with great spiritual powers which do not belong to them; why, in the end, he will believe it, and will justify all that you have to say against the meddlesome influence

of a caste clergy. I will tell you what we do. First, we tell the clergy they are a class. That they must dress like a class, that they must think and act and speak like a class, they must not go here and go there, and do this and do that, all which things you say that *you* may do innocently. Why it is the laity, or a portion of the laity, who keep the clergy artificial, priestly and presumptuous; and then, when you have so hedged in the parson and cut him off from your life-thoughts, and life-pleasures, and your life-work, you turn round and find fault with him for showing that he is one of a class, and that he holds views which you have taught him to hold about himself and his office. You bow down before him, and then you object to his putting his yoke upon your neck and claiming 'dominion over your faith!'

Well, the other view of the clergy is this: that the clergyman is one placed exactly on the same level with the laity; with the same hopes, the same liability to error, the same fears, the same temptations, and the same aspirations. He in no wise differs from any of you. He is not even a part of an ecclesiastical system divinely ordained. All churches upon earth are in one sense divinely ordained, in another sense none are; the spirit in them is divine, the form is simply human. There is no divinely-appointed order for the Church. Apostolical succession, if real, would be of no value. An episcopal church is not a divine, but a human institution, the Church of England is no more divine than any other body of Christians governed in any other way. All sects are

divine just in proportion as they make men better; that is what Christ's Church exists for, and that is what the sects profess to do, and actually do in a measure accomplish. I may feel, having been born and bred in the ecclesiastical order of Episcopacy, that I prefer that order ; I think it more liberal, more regular, and more large-hearted and wise, and so I may like to stay there ; but I do not say therefore it is divine in the sense of having come down straight from God, like a second law from a new Sinai. I may think there are advantages connected with the State Church, that is my opinion ; I may think it is advantageous for my Church to remain connected with the State ; but that, again, is not a matter of divine right. The Church, or the 'Kingdom of God,' as it is called in the New Testament, has been set up by Christ, but its outward form varies, and must vary, from age to age ; the Church is set to win over and to ply men in all sorts of ways, and to bring them back by the help of an outward organisation to the Shepherd and Bishop of their souls. And a clergyman, brethren, is one of you set over you in the Church to tell you what you ought all to know beforehand, to inspire you with thoughts and feelings which you ought to have, but which you require constantly to have rekindled in you. He is your representative. All that belongs to the sphere of morality belongs to the clergyman ; all that belongs to the sphere of the spiritual life belongs to him ; but it does not belong to him more than to you. It is common property. Your joy ought to be his joy ; your battles his battles ; your victories his victories. And because

you have placed him in the pulpit, and asked him every Sunday to tell you the things which you ought to know and do, you should not feel that there is a hard-and-fast line of division between you; you ought not to think he is meddling when he tries to enter into the details of practical life, which are the details of your life and of his life.

107. I said there is a strong feeling in some minds that the clergyman ought to preach doctrines, and not be too personal, the people were to apply the doctrine for themselves. I heard the other day of a young Dissenting minister, who was invited on trial to preach to a new congregation. His first sermon was a fresh, glowing sermon; he believed in the reformation of his fellow-creatures, and now that he had before him a set of men and women whose failures and weaknesses he could pretty well guess, he proposed to set them right; so he told them that they must not drink and must not lie, and they must not backbite; in short, he detailed all the bad things they were doing every day. He had these things on his heart to say, and he said them out boldly, and as he came down from the pulpit, he felt tolerably satisfied with himself and his sermon. But an influential deacon in the vestry sharply reprimanded him, and told him *that* was not what they wanted, they did not want to be exposed, to be condemned, and this by a presumptuous young man, and the angry senior Christian wound up with a famous piece of advice: 'Stick to the doctrine, man, stick to the doctrine, that

can never do anybody any harm.' He might have added, 'nor any good either;' so long as you are not allowed to show where your doctrines impinge on the practice of daily life, your doctrine will be a windbag, as sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal.

108. I will now speak particularly of the Practice of the Clergy. I mean by the word 'practice' what you mean when you talk of the practice of the physician; I mean the sphere of his operations. I will remind you that he is a moral and spiritual teacher, so that the instant you come upon moral or spiritual ground, you come upon his ground, and he has a right to speak, whether it be on a political question, or a social or a mercantile question, or any other subject; when you, directly by your actions and words, in any department, come to impinge on the moral sphere he may say, 'Though I know nothing about politics or parties, or commercial or monetary matters, I have a right to pronounce upon certain tendencies and outcomes of your actions, and to tell you that they are wrong, and that you do them at the peril of your soul.' And when the preacher speaks so, he will be no meddler; he will be a moral and spiritual teacher as he ought to be, he will speak the truth boldly as he ought to speak. And yet he exercises no special prerogative; we may all do as much for ourselves and for others, but the clergyman is bound to do it in church (and you are not bound), he is bound formally and publicly to decide upon the drift and character of certain actions, and draw for you as best he can the lines of right and wrong in your

respective spheres; therefore the clergyman does no more and no less than you are bound to do in your own private circles, only he does it officially, in a representative manner for all of you.

Then people tell you that this is meddling, that the clergyman ought not to meddle with what he does not understand; what does he know about politics, or the money market, or business, or trade?

109. *[1] I do not know how bread is made. Perhaps I could not make a loaf if I were to try; it would probably be a bad one, but I know when bread is good. The baker says to me, 'You have no right to have an opinion on these questions.' I say, 'It is quite time you should get that notion out of your head; it may be true that I do not know how much flour, and yeast, and water, go to make a proper loaf; but if you bring me a bad loaf, I know it is bad, and I have a right to tell you so. You impinge on the sphere of my experience, and I have a right to my opinion. You, the baker, may be prejudiced about the quality of your bread; you may try and believe it is good when it is made up of alum and potatoes, and so forth, but I have no interest in believing that; I pay my money, and have a right to tell you when you sell me a bad loaf.' And so you complain of the clergyman because he is an outsider, but that is what makes him a good judge of you and your doings. People may deceive themselves when their interests and prejudices

[1] The stars refer to a notice in the Preface.

are concerned, but take a man who stands outside of these, and he will be most likely to give you a correct opinion upon the matter.

Do you mean, brethren, to tell me when I order from my carpenter so many camp stools for my church, and when these camp stools come home and you take your seats, and they all break down one after the other, as they did the other Sunday, that you are no judges of whether the camp stools are good or bad? You do not know how they are made, but you know they are not good because they happen to have impinged on the sphere of your experience.

Now when you are immersed in your professional work your interests are concerned, you may blind your eyes to the tendencies of certain actions, and certain consequences of action, and therefore you want some person to stand up aloft as it were and look to the general results outside the sphere in which you live. You are in the midst of the combat. You are often an imperfect judge of how the battle goes. If you are to conquer and be wise, you must often call in some outsider to help you. *The general on the hill who directs the army is more likely to be able to tell the battalions how to move, and what battalions to oppose, and when to get out of the way, because he sees from his watch-tower all that is going on, which the battalions in action cannot see. The engineer of a ship down in the fire-room is very thankful to the man on deck, who tells him in which direction the ship is going. Does he say, 'I will not attend to that ignorant fellow up there, what does he know about

engines? Well, he knows nothing about engines, but he can see what is ahead, and you cannot, because he is up aloft and you are down below, and you ought to be very thankful to him.

So what the clergy do, or ought to do, is this: they ought to sit up aloft, as it were, and bring the overseeing element of morality to bear upon your judgment,—the element of honesty, of clear-sighted integrity, which so easily drops out of your daily work, because when a man is passionately interested, he is not always quick to see the right—he gets hurried past right, he gets hurled into wrong. He is on the rocks and shallows before he knows it. Let the clergy pronounce upon the tendency of actions, let them define moral conditions.

110. I know very little of money speculations, but I know that at a certain point speculation ought to be called by a different name. It ought to be called robbery. I know that sometimes companies start with no capital, and they expect a ship which goes to sea as it were, with its timbers rotten and its spars and sails worn out, they expect the ship to come to port; and I, who am behind the scenes, and am not going to make any profit by the speculation,—I can tell these men, as I see them put off in their rotten ship, 'You will not come home, your bubble will burst, and it will be with hurt and damage to you and your fellow-creatures. Some of you, at a great sacrifice of conscience and of honour, may get into port; but the chances are you will all come to grief.' We have a right, I say, as

moral teachers, when we see immoral and unsound speculations going on, to say, 'This is an infamous undertaking, this is an iniquitous job;' and though perhaps if I engaged in it I should get my share of the profits, I will not, because it is a treacherous and unjust thing. You know as well as I do that the wicked transactions to which I refer are no delusions of mine. Men live by them—they ruin themselves and others by them. And when the clergyman calls your attention to them, all you have to say is, 'What do you know of these things?' Well, he knows this: that your conscience should be made alive, and the power of the spiritual life within you brought to bear on baseness, and knavery, and lying, and heartless robbery of all kinds, and you must not put your fingers into your ears as though nothing had been said. I come upon you with these warnings like a thief in the night; I will be crafty and catch you with guile, for you cannot, without condemning yourselves or committing a rude breach of manners, stalk out of the church when such things are mentioned. Suppose at this moment a man were now to get up and go out, what would be said? It would be said, 'There is a man who has a bad speculation in hand; he should have sat still, and then we should not have found him out.'

III. But iniquity does not begin and end with the commercial world. As politicians, you may cheat your conscience on the subject of giving votes here and there. I do not say that this is an easy question. I do not say that a man may not vote in detail with his party whilst

personally disapproving of the detail. To act at all in combination there must be a certain suppression of private opinion. You may have no right to break up a great party, and prevent useful legislation on a question of detail. It is another thing to oppose great measures on principle, and then, when you have turned the opposite party out, step into power, and carry the very measures you opposed only a few months previously. Some cases may be doubtful, but there ought to be no two opinions about the morality of such a case as that. Nothing can alter the broad outlines of justice and truth —in or out of Parliament. Some courses of political action are honourable and others are not honourable. The moral teacher, then, may fairly ask, 'Are you on the whole bringing your conscience to bear on your political life or not? Have you sinned by your silence at times when you ought to have spoken, by your speech at times when you ought to have been silent; have you helped to impair the moral forces, and injure the sense of moral responsibility in Parliament; have you done what you could for the sake of power, or gain, or popularity, to bring the working of the constitution down to a low moral level, and make men think and act on low spiritual planes? These are amongst the questions which may be asked in the pulpit. We want our politics moral and our politicians pure.

Ah! my friends, when a man gets up in the House of Commons full of generous and right feeling, and says he still believes in principles—still believes that it is good to be true—better to be honest than to be successful—

better to lose in a right cause than win in a wrong; I say if that man is not a mere fool or hypocrite, if he is not a hopeless log and marplot, and if he does believe in something, if he is willing to suffer for what he believes, if he is a true man—then he represents that righteous element in the House which is more powerful in the country than the astuteness of a hundred hoary politicians. He may stammer, he may blunder, he may essay to go in armour that is too heavy for him, but the beardless youth with sling and stone will slay the mailed giant! If there is one thing more certain than another it is the triumph of principle and of him who wields it. Principle is power.

112. But every profession has its peculiar temptations. Are not lawyers sometimes hurried into dishonourable practices for the sake of professional advancement? In the secondary spheres of the legal profession especially there are many opportunities of making unjust gains; and when the clergyman comes and says, 'You have no right to hurry that poor widow into a lawsuit in order that you may fill your pockets; it is one thing when people are silly enough, or unfortunate enough, or desperate enough to go to law, it is one thing if you then step in and do your duty as a legal man; it is another thing to vamp up a case, and persuade persons to be litigious in order that you may prey upon them like a vulture on carrion.' A great many honest men do not seem to see this. They think it is all fair in their profession—their eyes are blinded by their own interests; instead of saying,

as many an honest lawyer has been known to say, 'This is not a case for me; you could arrange this without litigation. I should advise you not to come to blows; get a third person to mediate.' Instead of that, there comes a harpy of the law, and says, 'Leave it to me; you must have your rights; we must prosecute; we must hear of no compromise; we must drive it through the court;' and the consequence is that where 5*l.* would have done the business, you do not come out of it under 500*l.* And it becomes the moral teacher to say to the lawyer, 'Your profession is the honourable profession of the law and justice, not the dishonourable trade of litigation and swindling.'

113. Wrong tendencies are subtle things, and assert themselves in subtle ways. I have seen where a feeling existed for wrong action long before it culminated. A man says to me, 'You know I am in the medical profession; it would be such a glorious thing if there were a great railway accident close to our hospital, and numbers of human beings were to be brought in maimed to our wards; it would be the making of the place and the medical staff; we are close to the railway, and yet all the accidents happen somewhere else.' Now a coarse joke is a coarse joke and nothing more—but some sentiments reveal the approach of a certain wrong tendency of thought; but if a doctor gets to look at his profession from the strictly professional point of view, what does he do? He entirely loses sight of the relation of the medical profession to society. He is in danger of losing the

sense of what he ought to be as a man as well as a medical man. A medical man ought to exist in order to alleviate suffering, but not to create or desire the creation of suffering in order that he may have the opportunity of relieving it.

Again, we have seen lately some curious instances of the necessity of making war. It was said in the last Franco-Prussian war that war was necessary in order to give the soldiers something to do. What did that mean? It meant that the people who had charge of the army had entirely lost sight of the proper functions of an army. They had got to esteem the army for its own sake instead of for the sake of the country. The country in their minds existed only for the army, so those who ruled by the army were compelled by the army to make war. It was a war invented by military despotism for the sake of military power and profit, and the country was sacrificed to the rapacity of the military interest. That was a selfish interest; and when you act on selfish motives you have a wrong basis of action. The clergyman ought to tell you that. The moral teacher ought to tell you that selfishness is wrong everywhere; that there is no exception to that rule, whether it be the selfishness of a little child who takes away a sugar-plum from another more helpless than himself, or the selfishness of the man who leads thousands of his fellow-creatures to slaughter because he hopes to keep himself and his despotic crew in power. The moral is the same; and, although I know very little about home politics and very little about foreign politics, and still

less about armies, I say that the man who wantonly and without a righteous cause plunges into a long and bloody war has forgotten the right use of armies, and is acting upon an immoral basis.

114. Once more, my brethren, as I am this morning busy with the plague-spots of our modern life, I may as well here allude to something which lies at the root of so much modern misery. I mean idleness. People are wicked, they are miserable, because they have got nothing to do. You say, 'May I not do what I like with my own time?' I say, No, you may not do what you like with your time. Your time does not belong to you, any more than my time belongs to me. If God had constituted the world on the principle of every man for himself instead of every man for his fellow-men, then you might do what you like with your own time. But you are owed to society; you have no right to rob society; you have no right to waste your time; you have no right to be idle. I will tell you what, in the divinely-constituted order of things, idleness will bring. It will breed selfishness in every possible form; it will breed all kinds of unbalanced feelings; it will breed backbiting and mischief-making; it will wake dormant lusts and stimulate lying, and malice, and treachery; and there is hardly anything bad which it will not breed; and yet what do we find? Men and women rejoicing because they have nothing whatever to do; or whining because they have nothing to do; or looking forward to the time when they shall have nothing to do, and

delighting in the prospect of perfect uselessness. Here is a man who hangs about the house all day saying, 'I have nothing to do.' He is a burden and worry to himself and to his fellow-creatures. Has not the moral teacher a right to say to such a one, 'Get out, you drone, and go and find something to do?' You may say it more politely if you please, but that is what you mean. That is just what his friends feel about him. Supposing he has been trying to find something to do—say he has looked for work and not found it; well, he must try down lower and lower until he gets hold of some sort of honourable work. Men talk about the indignity of doing work that is beneath them, but the only indignity that they should care for is the indignity of doing nothing. Our Lord in early life was doubtless a poor artisan; was He not the 'Carpenter's Son,' and was He not 'subject' to His parents? Every Jew learned a trade—even kings were tradesmen. Paul made tents and Peter caught fish, but in these days to be simply useful and honest is a poor ambition.

115. But I will frankly confess that the women in this age are more to be pitied than the men, because it is less obvious how a woman who wants to be useful and do work is to find employment or occupation. Women of leisure are asking wearily, 'What are we to do?'

If I were addressing a congregation a step or two lower down in society, I should find that problem very hard to solve; but I do not find it so hard to solve when I look around me this morning. Half your morbid

feelings, half your uselessness, the irritability of your temper, your incapacity to live comfortably with your fellow-creatures, my dear sisters, is because you have nothing to do, and have never been taught that you ought to do anything. You know very well that part of your life was spent in the schoolroom; then you had your tasks prescribed; but when you emerged into the world—after you 'came out'—there were weeks and months together, every year, in which you had practically little or nothing to do with yourselves. That is quite as much the fault of parents as of daughters. My brethren, is not this a subject where the moral teacher may step in and say to mothers, 'See that your children are occupied?' 'What,' you ask, 'is my daughter to do? she must get accomplishments, she must cultivate her mind a little, pay some attention to her body; but what more? The routine of studies and accomplishments leaves my daughter unsatisfied, it is true; she quarrels all day long with her sisters, her occupations and amusements are of the most frivolous and unsatisfactory character; but what is she to do?'

116. Brethren, in the first place, there is one thing which strikes me, and which you are perfectly able to realise, and it is this: that when young women marry they are exceedingly ignorant of their household duties, and of what their husbands are likely to expect from them; therefore one great thing for a mother to do is to teach her daughter the duties of married life. Let her give her what experience she can; and she can do

this—she can allow her daughter to work out some experiences at least under her own eye. If a great many young women were thus engaged in actually going through at home some at least of the duties which would fit them to take care of a house of their own, there would not be half so much trouble and annoyance in store for them when married life came.

What is the case now? Before marriage a woman has been half 'educated' in several accomplishments, not one of which she has mastered. She has learned a little history, geography, and sums, but nothing thoroughly—nothing that has interested her, nothing she cares to remember; and when her husband receives her into his house he finds she cannot keep accounts, she has no idea of what servants ought to do or to be, she has no method. She spends a pound where ten shillings would do, she does in so many hours what ought to be done in so many minutes, she idles away her time—puts off her morning duties to the afternoon, and her afternoon duties to next day. And thus on the threshold arises confusion, and the germs of trouble between her and her husband. He says, 'It is not fair that my house should go to wrack and ruin in this way, because my wife does not understand her simplest duties; it is not fair that my money should be spent, and there be nothing to show for it;' and hence the early spring days of wedded life are fretted with little gusts of passion, and little clouds of discontent, and it may be that unkind words are spoken, and habits formed which lie at the root of life-long differences, and may ultimately

be the means of dividing those whom God has joined together. Is not this a serious question? The details may appear to you insignificant, but life-long happiness or misery may depend upon them for all that. Are we so forbearing, so gentle, so kind, that we can afford to neglect the practical ways of getting on comfortably and well with each other? What is a young woman's experience of married life? A series of discoveries.

She does not know this and that and the other, because she has never been told. She knows next to nothing about men. She is surprised to find her husband's mind on nearer acquaintance so unlike her own. She thinks he ought never to be preoccupied. He comes home tired, she thinks he is cross. His mind is still full of business details; although he has not seen her all day he can hardly speak to her, he must go to his study and make a few notes. She thinks he is concealing something from her, and so when he comes out of his study with a clear brow and wants her society she is affronted: it is now his turn to wonder.

Or, again, she cannot estimate the value of his time; she cannot see the necessity for his glancing through the 'Times' in the morning instead of talking to her, although the whole work of the day may turn on something seen in the morning paper. She has no idea of the relative importance of different things—a bit of ribbon and a speech by Mr. Gladstone are equally important in her eyes, or rather the first is more important than the second.' Why any exertion should be made for anything outside the family, or for anything

which does not bear upon the narrow home circle, is unintelligible to her.

She is amazingly ignorant of the simplest laws of health. How much disease and misery, mental and physical, might not mothers spare their daughters by a little timely instruction! But everything connected with health is a mystery, the reasons of nothing are ever explained, the consequences of nothing are ever foretold. So, many women cannot take care of their health at all, and never learn until ignorance and neglect bring misery, and misery drives to remedies that often come too late. And yet women complain that there is nothing to learn and nothing to do! It is a hard, hard thing for a woman to stumble into all sorts of mistakes and blunders, about herself, her husband and her work; yet mothers put this upon their daughters without a misgiving. At last, no doubt, the house begins to go on pretty well, and things settle themselves? but after what anxiety, waste, and ruin of feeling, ruin of sympathy, often ruin of health, and wreck of illusions? Therefore, there is one obvious duty when a woman says there is nothing for her to do; let her prepare herself for the future, let mothers try and bring up their daughters to be fit for wives before they commit them to husbands.

117. But as society is now constituted all women cannot marry. It has become the fashion lately, to make a virtue of necessity, and descant upon the advantages of single blessedness. 'Women do not want to marry, they would not marry if they could; there are

other better things to be done than keep house for the worst half of human-kind.' Such opinions are never likely to be very general; but there is something in them. It is the natural and healthy chafing of civilised woman, at her narrow and restricted sphere in society. But the best and wisest women would probably express themselves more in this way:—'Marriage, in most cases, is to a woman what a regular profession is to a man. It is absurd to say, that women as a class will ever have an insuperable aversion to marriage; exceptional women may not care for it, many are obliged to do without it, and a few loud talkers and silly ignorant girls will affect to despise it; but it takes a good deal to upset a natural law; it may be violated, it cannot be altered; very idle is all the talk about the Franchise and other rights unsexing women; you might as well say that putting a rose into rich soil would make a turnip of it. The rose was made too well for that originally; you may impede or foster its growth, you cannot change its nature.'

But what if a woman does not marry? Why of course, then, as all the world knows, it is more difficult for her to find something to do. Why? Because she has never been properly educated. But a man who does not want to marry, he is well educated; he has a thousand interests, in his profession, in public life, in science, in literature, in art, in social questions; or if he has no profession, a well-educated man will or ought to be able without much difficulty to open up some way for himself. But a woman if she does not marry is often fit for nothing

in the world but a gossip. I know many noble single women who have led noble single lives, who have been down to old age like sun-light in the house; but they have been so, in spite of every difficulty; the men have not helped them, the women have not helped them, society has not helped them, they have helped themselves. I say that our women, our ladies, should be taught better, should be taught longer, should not be worn away with study, but drawn out, refreshed, exhilarated, developed, educated by having their minds presented with subjects congenial, interesting, and worthy of attention. A woman ought to know what is in her, what she can do and care for, what she is fit for, married or unmarried.

118. Now-a-days a girl's education ends just as she is beginning to unfold; just when she has reached the point where she might be interested in something, she is snatched away from the school-room, with unripe judgment, with unreal views of life, and her mind, which had just begun to bud, slowly withers, or narrows, or becomes a blank. Marriage comes upon her unprepared; or single life, family misfortune, perhaps penury, comes upon her, still more unprepared. And what is she to do? She can do nothing. She is not fit to teach—she has never been properly taught herself. Professions and honourable employments are closed to her, and she has no energy to open them for herself.

119. I say to women of leisure, you may be left

unmarried, you may be left penniless, and still you complain, in the heyday of health and youth, that you have nothing to do; prepare yourselves for the future, whatever it may be; save yourselves from the life of gossip and scandal, save yourselves from the dulness of frivolity, or worse,—the despair and bitter unrest of sin. Why are women to be mere triflers? Let them take a serious interest in art, let them be guided to some congenial study, let it be a branch of science or history; something which draws them and attracts them—and how soon are women attracted and absorbed if they have an able teacher! Let them write. They can do almost anything they try to do; but they are not encouraged, they are snubbed and laughed at, and they are easily discouraged; they cannot start for themselves, they cannot organise, but they will work if they are set to work.

There is light upon the horizon. Woman has contended with the apathy of her own sex, with the prejudices of society, with the ignorance and brutality of men; but the time draws near when she shall have her reward. What she can do she will be allowed to do, she will be helped to do—to save her life, to save her soul. She will be helped to education and to employment. She shall not always wander about our streets homeless, because she has found the hunger and dulness of life not to be borne. She shall not starve in garrets, because every gate save the open gate to ruin is barred and bolted. She shall not sit listless and petulant in blooming health in our fashionable drawing-rooms, without an

aim or interest, waiting for some good or evil—she hardly cares which—to come and break up the monotony of a life which has the promise of all things and the possession of nothing.

120. I shall be accused of overstating the case. It cannot be overstated. The worth, the sweetness, the intelligence, the quickness of women as they are, cannot be overstated either; but they are all this, I repeat, in spite of men, in spite of society, and in spite of an unsound and radically defective system of education. But whilst this state of things lasts it is absurd to say that women have nothing to do. And the moral teacher should not only point to the evil, he should point to the remedy, he 'should be a helper of their joy.' He should say, 'Do not rest until you have at least some one interest in life beyond flirtation and gossip, and let it be a solid interest; work at your easel steadily, work at music steadily, take up a branch of science, and learn it well; when you have learnt it try and apply it on however small a scale, try and understand it all round; let it be botany, let it be the structure of the human body, and the laws of health, let it be the ranges of extinct creations unfolded in geology, and written upon stone with marvellous outline and detail in our museums; or let it be literature, some period of history, some school of poetry, some phase of romance; look out for some teacher who can kindle in you the love of something; there are many able and good men willing to help women in this way, there ought to be seminaries, and colleges, and classes,

and professors accessible to women, for purposes of mental guidance and instruction.

121. If you live in a village, if you are connected with a parish, something may be done with schools, with work societies, with the poor; this, perhaps, is the one branch of practical, social usefulness outside the family circle, which is understood and practised largely by women. But it is not enough for all women, and it is not suited to many.

Then we ought to be thankful to those who are opening up new sources of employment for women. They can now go before the School Board and earn their bread, either as teachers, or visitors, or secretaries. And I may here mention an admirable scheme set forth by Louisa M. Hubbard in a pamphlet, entitled 'Work for Ladies in Elementary Schools,' which unfolds with great practical ability a scheme for enabling ladies to become parish school mistresses, and thus get an honourable livelihood, an income and a house. The importance of such efforts cannot be over-estimated. Two facts have now struggled fairly into terrible prominence. The first is that thousands of women rush into sin, or die of disease and starvation for want of work; and the second is that women are fit for a vast number of employments, which have hitherto been kept from them, and which, nerved by misery and hunger, they are slowly wrenching from the apathetic grasp of men. These two facts alone are enough to establish women's claims to the Franchise, and one of the great reasons why thousands

have perished, and are annually perishing in body and soul, is just because there is no one to plead systematically in Parliament for the education and the employment of women. Idleness, frivolity, ignorance and want—you will not put these down by Acts of Parliament levelled at physical disease. You must cure the mental malady, and attack the cause not the symptom, and you must do this by educating and employing women. In the last resort the devil always becomes teacher and taskmaster.

122. Whatever excuses there may be at present for an idle and useless woman, there is hardly any excuse for an idle man. If a man has not been educated in his childhood, he is thrown upon his resources; he may seek education—numbers do—but the majority of the people before me have been educated. Yet what do I find? I find men who have been educated hanging about their families, the supernumeraries of their social circles, because they have nothing to do. They are the drones of society. I say such a life is not happy, is not likely to be moral, and there is no excuse for it. Here is a man who goes into a profession that does not suit him. He says, 'I will give up this; I don't think it is my duty to do it;' and before he sees anything else, he gives up what he has got. It was not good enough for him.

But, my friends, if you can take the lowest occupation you will be more noble than you are thus, going about well dressed with nothing to do, making your family

wretched and your own life intensely unsatisfactory. A young man came to me the other day and said, 'Can you find me something to do?' I said, 'What do you want to do?' He said, 'I think I could take the place of an usher in a school. I can teach. I like teaching.' 'Have you had a place?' 'Oh yes! I have just left one.' I said, 'Why? was the pay bad?' He said, 'No. Good pay.' 'Was it a respectable school?' 'Yes.' 'Did you quarrel with any one there?' 'No.' 'Why did you leave?' 'Because I did not like to get up at half-past six in the morning.' My friends, that man of course went from place to place and could get nothing to do. Nothing was good enough for him. You cannot find anything good enough for you unless you take what you can get; take what you can get, and you will get something better. No one will employ a man who objects to get up at half-past six. There is no servant attending here morning or evening who is not obliged, perhaps every morning, to get up at half-past six; but here was a young man who could not put that amount of self-restraint on himself. What lies at the bottom of ill success and failure, what makes life rotten? In nine cases out of ten it is idleness; and idleness is only another word for selfishness. Young men, you must bring Christianity to bear on your sloth and apathy; upon your headlong tendency to indolence and pleasure; upon your boundless capacity for drifting—drifting down the shallows of life.

123. Look to the Exemplar of life-work. Remember

that Jesus Christ was a workman, and He told you that His Father worked. And every one is sent by the same Father into the same field to work. You are not always to find work that is pleasant, but to find work which you can do, and by-and-bye you may get work which is more pleasant. Do you suppose that my work is always pleasant? God forbid that I should set myself up as a model for you, but I may be a fair representative of many here; my experience has probably been substantially the same as most people's in the matter of work. When you begin to work seriously there are many details you do not like. As you get on, you get more at home in your work; you get acclimatised to it, and your heavy task becomes lighter and more grateful to you. Eight years ago I began my ministerial work in Bethnal Green, and first got accustomed to going into the badly ventilated houses of the poor, into sick rooms, and amongst dying people; do you suppose that was altogether a pleasant way of life? I used in those days to have the greatest horror of dead bodies, but by the time the cholera broke out in the east end of London I had gone through such a training in that matter that I could rub a cholera patient very comfortably in the London Hospital whilst the dead were being lifted out of the next bed. The disagreeables seem dreadful at first, but one gets over them, especially if one has any strong motive. Look at all doctors for instance; not only does habit help them, but they get a motive, an enthusiasm, which helps them still more; and it is the same in almost every department. If you mean to do

work and do your best work, you must make your motive conquer your distaste; you must not mind fighting on a little way in the dark. Many a boy finds his first task at school intolerably hard, but at the next the construing and parsing go better, and the sense of getting on helps him, and by-and-bye the Latin or Greek page becomes luminous with interest, and achievement crowns endeavour.

When I first began to preach in the east end of London I used to write elaborate sermons, but the people would not come to church. Then I thought I would preach extempore; so I went up one evening into the pulpit with my Bible only, and proposed to address the scanty congregation before me on the words, Luke xxiv. 29, 'Abide with us, for it is towards evening, and the day is far spent.' I do not think I had any misgivings about my ability to go on, but when I had read the text over once I was glad to say it over again. I then found I had forgotten my first head, and went on to the second, but the instant I had begun the second I could recollect nothing but the first. It was too late then, so I tried the third; but of course that fitted in nowhere without the first and the second. So I read the text over again, and when I had done that I recollected another text which had nothing to do with it, and said that, and then I got exceedingly uncomfortable, and so did the congregation; and in about ten minutes from the commencement of my extempore sermon I read the text over again, and as nothing more occurred to me I was glad enough to leave off. After that my friends

advised me to read my sermons; but I said, 'No, I am going to try the other plan now;' and so Sunday after Sunday I stammered on, and people said I did it to save myself trouble, and what a pity it was that I should try to preach without book, and so forth. And for years extempore preaching was pain and labour to me. And now I am glad I did not give in, as I was on the point of giving in more than once. Young men expect too much—they will have everything go smoothly. They are too impatient for results. They are too disheartened with failures—or worse, they are exorbitantly fastidious and selfish. Nothing is good enough for them. They go into a place. There is something they do not like; a disagreeable man at the top of the firm; the ventilation is bad; there is a draught; a window is too low or too high; or there is not light enough. They can put up with nothing. Of course, then there is nothing to be done. You must begin at the beginning; you must not mind going into the ranks; you must rough it a little if necessary. Try down lower and lower if you cannot get what you want at first; but again I say avoid the fiend of Idleness!

Dear friends, do not tell me I may not speak these words to you. Do not tell me I occupy my time in preaching about doctrine without practice, or practice without doctrine. I declare there is not a sentence I have uttered this morning which I could not range appropriately under one or another of the great Christian doctrines, and I could show that the whole of my exhortation is founded upon deep and central principles

of the Divine life. Even some allusions which you may call trivial, and details which you may think egotistical, are not out of place if they give you any comfort, if they give you any courage, any hope. My experiences belong to you as long as I am here to minister among you. I will not separate myself from you; I will not let the old go away uncheered; I will not let the sorrowful go away uncomforted. I will not let the children go; I will not let the young men go; I long to help them. Their difficulties are mine; their doubts and temptations are mine.

Oh! if I could think that ever a ray of light or gladness came to any of you through me, how happy, how thankful should I be! I will have no 'dominion over your faith;' but let me, oh let me, be 'a helper of your joy!'

ARGUMENT.

NOT Pleasure, but heavenly-mindedness, is the true undertone for all life.

But Pleasure cannot be safely ignored or crushed. Pleasure is natural and lawful. Physical, mental, social, affectional, and spiritual pleasures, all have their place and work in the constitution of man.

Two theories of life stand on either side of this acknowledgment of the legitimacy of Pleasure. One is the denial of Pleasure—Asceticism. The other is the abuse of Pleasure—Profligacy.

The right use of Pleasure is discussed in connection with balls, theatres, horse-races, and other pastimes. Pleasure is not a legitimate end, but a legitimate incident of life.

Work and the development of the whole man is shown to be the legitimate end of life, and the only right way of seeking the Kingdom of Heaven. The man of Pleasure and the man of Work are then contrasted, as each draws to the close of life.

The Thirteenth Discourse deals with sacrifice. The grounds of Asceticism are stated, and the necessity of rightly defining Pleasure is pointed out.

The law of sacrifice comes in to harmonise the two. The darkness and the brightness of sacrifice are then illustrated. Sacrifice is beautiful when illumined by benevolence, patriotism, love.

The Divine Sacrifice is then referred to. The sacrifice of Jesus Christ is explained, and some hints are given to guide us in applying the law of sacrifice to ourselves.

Twelfth Discourse.

ON PLEASURE.

DELIVERED DECEMBER 10, 1871.

ST. MATTHEW (vi. 33) records these words of Christ: 'Seek ye first the Kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things (the necessaries and satisfactions of life) shall be added unto you.'

And these words strike the key-note of the right relations between pleasure and duty. You could not have a more sobering undertone of feeling than this to accompany you every day of your lives, 'Seek ye first the Kingdom of God.' There should be something strong, steady, settled as the under-current of life. There are plenty of little eddies, plenty of little gusts of wind coming and breathing fitfully upon the surface of the waters, which may be extremely healthy and delightful, but down below should be calm depths—something deep and permanent must strike the key-note of your life—a moral something.

I cannot remind you too often that the inward principle of Christian life is Divine, whilst the outward form of Christian life is human. Let me explain myself at once. Human society is divinely constituted. Jesus Christ exhibited that divine constitution to the world more clearly than it ever had been revealed. He spoke of the Kingdom of God, and of God's righteousness. The Kingdom of God, the Kingdom of Heaven, is not only something distant in the future, although it is that; but it is something present with us now. 'This *is* life eternal, to know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent.' Christ came to found that Kingdom of God as an outward and visible kingdom. He came also to found on earth an invisible kingdom in the heart of man; and the reason why you are here before me to-day, why you call yourselves Christians, why you are bound together, signed by the seal of one baptism, is this, because you have been constituted in the order of a divine kingdom set up on earth. 'Seek ye first the Kingdom of God,' seek to realise outwardly in the world the invisible kingdom of God which is in the heart, 'seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness,' and then 'all these things,' *i.e.*, all that is necessary both for your body and your mind, for your complex life, all that is good for you, will in some way or other be added to you; the sacrifices of life will be good for you, even pains physical and mental will be good for you, when you have learned to seek the Kingdom of God and His righteousness. And pleasure shall be good for you when you

know how to use it, when you seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness.

125. Now, in view of these remarks, I advance upon the special consideration of pleasure. I want to know what is the right place which pleasure ought to hold in our every-day life. I want to know whether pleasure is a pestilent thing to be crushed, or whether it is a good gift coming down from the Father of Lights to be used? I wish, in fact, to lay down some kind of doctrine of pleasure for the Christian man. Now we cannot disguise from ourselves that almost every system of morality and many religions have sneered at pleasure, or have attempted to assign to it a most degraded rank; when tolerated at all, it has been brought under very strained, severe, and coercive laws. There is no doubt, brethren, that Christian morals, as they are very often taught, are supposed to be diametrically opposed to pleasure; so that in one sense it would be impossible, being a Christian, to have what you call a doctrine of pleasure. I will say once for all, that any religious doctrine which denies me pleasure is a dangerous and false doctrine. Do not suppose that I am advocating unbridled license under the name of pleasure. I am not standing up for ill-regulated enjoyments of any kind; or for any pleasure that is calculated to prove hurtful to your body or soul; but I say this, that there have been sometimes a religion and moralities which have so lamentably misunderstood the constitution of our nature as to suppose that all those faculties which we have within us for

the enjoyment of the body, mind, and spirit are of the earth, earthy, if not of the devil, devilish.

Now if we want to understand what God intended us to be, we must try to understand the nature of our mental and physical constitution. God has ordained that you shall learn about Him when you have learned something about yourselves and something about human society. He proposes by the voice of general experience, by the voice of health, by the voice of conscience, by the many voices of joy and sorrow, to be your master and your guide through the revelation of His nature in your nature. Settle it in your own minds that these bodies of ours are intended, amongst other things, for pleasure; that these minds of ours are intended for pleasure, and that these spirits of ours are also intended for pleasure. All three are intended also for work and for duty, and this, no doubt, primarily; but God has made your body capable of responding pleasurably to an external world, He has given you senses, and unless you think He has made your body all wrong, you are bound to think that those senses were intended to correspond to, and lay hold on certain outward objects, and take pleasure in them. You may or you may not approve of this, but that is the way God has made man, and you are forced to acknowledge thus much.

Brethren, I do believe that the new Christianity, as it will shine in our Church of the Future, will lead us to understand our human nature in its complex entirety, as it has never been understood before; our religion will not be an unbalanced thing; it will not be a dull and

irksome thing; but it will show us how we can enjoy without sinfulness, how we may do our duty without bitter constraint, and how we may rise out of the slavery of obedience to the mere moral law, into the joy of well-doing, into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

126. I deal first with physical pleasure. There are many here present in the bloom of health and early vigour, and you know what a glorious sense of buoyancy and freedom comes to you in the exhliaration of what you call animal spirits. I remember perfectly well when I was a child, and the memory, amongst others, of a similar kind remains to me now as bright and vivid as possible; I remember the glorious sensation of rushing down a green lawn one summer's afternoon, when I was not conscious of any physical infirmity in my body, but conscious of bounding health, and the air seemed to be alive to me, God's blessed sunshine was around me, and breathing the fresh, wild perfumes of summer, I seemed to become a part of that great Nature, one, as it were, with the trees, the birds, and the blue heavens above me, and I felt in every vein of my body a new swelling sense of life and health, which made me almost cry out with a kind of joyful intoxication of feeling, the fulness of the physical life. Will you tell me that that is not a good thing? I only know I wish I had it more often now. I believe it is a most wholesome feeling, and if we understood the laws of health a little better we should more often experience that kind of natural, simple pleasure,

the pleasure of mere existence, and the pleasure of being in the full healthy possession of the great, glad, aboriginal instincts.

> 'Tis life, not death, for which we pant,
> 'Tis life of which our nerves are scant,
> More life and fuller that we want.

127. Then there are the pleasures of the mind. You who are men of study know, when you come up to some new fact in history, in philosophy, in science, what a pleasure there is—it runs through you like an electric shock, when you see suddenly the connection, the subtle connection, between things which have baffled you, or when you bring the experiences of the study out into the world and lay them before men; you know what a noble thrill of pleasure sometimes bears you up in the statement of your truth, and in the working out of some practical course of duty; why, there is the calm sense, not only of having done your work, but also of downright mental exhilaration in the doing of it. You won't tell me *that* pleasure is not good to have. The schoolboy, when he goes tired to bed after having well worked and well played, deserves his satisfaction; the tradesman after a busy day, the professional man after a long round of visits, or the settlement of several trying cases, deserves his satisfaction; it is the gift of God; the cloud clears from his brow, and honest Pleasure sits enthroned and claims her own.

128. Then there are the social pleasures of life. A man is surrounded by his friends, and in assemblies where

well-balanced mind meets mind, there is an understood sympathy between conversers, speakers, and listeners, and on the broad human ground of fellowship, there is a vast amount of refreshment, of geniality, and of real unselfish pleasure, the pleasure of friends with friends. You won't tell me that that is wrong. It is high, it is legitimate pleasure.

129. Then there are the affectional pleasures, when a man is happy in his family relations, when a man is happy in his nearest socialities, when he believes in those about him and they believe in him, when he loves his wife and his wife loves him, when he is a good father, when he has good children and dear children, who grow up loving and honouring what is lovable and honourable, and looking to him as an example, and giving him back sweetly and naturally, with childlike simplicity, his great paternal feeling of love for them. Ah! many images will rise before you as I speak of the family life so dear to thousands of English hearts around me; for how many, many here this morning have experienced the sacred and glorious rushes of feeling which come upon the unspoiled affectional life of man. Here is a man who has been toiling all day in the workshop, or behind the counter, at his office, or on 'Change. He has had his mind ruffled by a number of things, but he looks forward to that bright, bright spot he calls 'home,' where all the toils of the day are forgotten, and the careworn side of life is put away. The rain may beat upon his face, the frost may begin to congeal as the night falls damp

and chill around him, he hastens on to that one spot, where those dear faces are waiting to greet him, he sees the light shining through the windows. As he approaches, the blind is hastily lifted and as hastily dropped, and before he has raised the knocker, and before he has rung the bell, the door is burst open, and laughing, rosy children rush out to meet him, and they pull him into the house, and take off his damp coat and set him down in his own chair, and a soft hand smooths the last business wrinkle from his brow, and gentle arms are soon about his neck, and where is the hard wind and the winter snow?

Are such scenes unfrequent amongst us? are they wrong? nay, can pleasure come in a form more pure, more salutary than in the form of family life. 'Whoso findeth a wife,' says Solomon, 'findeth a good thing, and he shall have favour from the Lord.' 'She shall keep house and be a joyful mother of children,' says David.

130. Then, God has given to all those who call upon him faithfully a pleasure or deep sense of joy in worshipping Him. Indeed, some of us, I fear, make far too much of the pleasures of prayer and too little of the pleasures of work. Almost all religions have condemned pleasure in most departments of life, but they have forgotten to condemn it in religion. We find, on the contrary, a most unbalanced state of ecstacy prevalent in religious communities past and present, which ecstacies often lead into dangerous practical heresies. I find constantly around me men and women who have an intense feeling

of worship, and yet after leaving church they can go back to their bad and idle lives, and don't seem to be any better for steeping themselves in the luxury of devotion ; it has been a luxury, nothing more. Yet we don't hear this commonly condemned, neither do I condemn it. I don't condemn any man or woman who finds pleasure in religious devotions. What I condemn is their fatal inconsistency. The life does not answer to the prayer. That is the mischief. Don't suppose that warm feelings are wrong in religion or anywhere else. It is the application that you make of them ; that is where people go wrong. All feeling is given you to help you to act ; and when that same feeling within you is misguided, it is not the power of feeling that is wrong—that is a precious power—but *you* are wrong, when you fail to make a right and proper use of it.

Brethren, store up in your hearts the memory and the prospect of the precious joy of devotion. Think of the hours when God has visited your spirit, when you felt that you were alone with Him in the secret moments of blessed joy ; but oh ! forget not that upon all those whom God thus blesses is laid the burden of work, that they should go forth invigorated and strengthened through joy in prayer, and not enervated by the mere luxury of devotion.

131. Now then, you see my view of pleasure. It is this ; it is a component part of human life, without which life cannot be healthy. What you have got to do is not to crush it, and not to abuse it, but to use it. There have

been these three theories of what we are to do with pleasure. There is, first, the theory that pleasure must be crushed. 'All that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eye, and the pride of life; these are not of the Father, but of the world: and the world passeth away, and the lust thereof.' When people quote these texts against enjoyment and the pleasures of the world, they forget that the 'world,' in the mouth of Christ and His Apostles, always meant the evil characteristics, the sensual tendencies, and the misguiding sophistries of the Greek or rather the Roman world of the period.

But, my brethren, the plan of crushing out your senses, the plan of denying them every kind of gratification has been tried, and has miserably failed. That was the plan of the early Church; and good men, conscientious men thought at one time that they could only get rid of the evil practices, which most people were in the habit of indulging in, by declaring war upon every kind of pleasure, and so they taught that everything which gratified the senses was wrong; and then we got the ascetic form of religion. Now asceticism is very wholesome on occasion as a protest against a bad kind of life, but it is a poor rule for a good life, it leaves out half life, and it ends by corrupting the other half. Will anyone tell me that the ascetic form of Christianity prolonged beyond its day has not been one of the most disastrous failures? It lingers with us now, but it is doing little good. Asceticism, I repeat, asceticism as a protest, may sometimes be powerful and wholesome, but

asceticism as a lasting rule of life will never answer, for it is founded on a misunderstanding of the human constitution. You may bury your senses, but they will be constantly resurrected; they will crop up in a number of abnormal and astonishing forms. They will come back with seven devils, probably more. If you put aside the proper use of that which God has given you richly to enjoy, and whereby you grow and develop, you will be haunted by phantoms that nothing can exorcise. For Nature is inexorable, she bows only to higher law, but not to tyranny, not to violence, not to murder; and asceticism means tyranny, violence and murder. Death is written in the ascetic's face, and death by violence. He walks about a living skeleton, filled with self-torment and fruitless pain, and upon this *caput mortuum* is written at last the unnatural and ghastly motto of '*Felo-de-Se*.'

132. Then there is the abuse of pleasure. I see around me, every day, young men burning out the lamp of life. I see them rushing into everything which titillates the senses; everything which has the name of, or that disgraces the name of pleasure is eagerly taken, sought out by them, and one after another idol is cast aside and broken up, because it is hopelessly inadequate to fulfil their insatiable need. They have abused pleasure, and pleasure has turned upon them, and has rent them where they stood. Put the lean ascetic on the right hand, and the bloated voluptuary on the left, and as far as truth of life goes there is not much to choose

between them, for each has gone hideously wrong, though one is nobly and the other basely wrong. The abuse of pleasure I need not trace any further, because our streets are reeking with it; our society is rotten with it; our social fabric is crumbling beneath it; our best institutions are being shaken and paralysed by it. I need not tell you that whatever may be done with pleasure, the abuse of pleasure is always, everywhere, and under all circumstances disastrous and degrading.

133. But the question you are by this time asking yourselves is this—How in my practical life am I to treat pleasure? What am I to do with it, supposing it always comes before me in an unbalanced shape, supposing it always comes with the finger of the tempter? Supposing no pleasure ever comes which does not seem a little wrong, which does not tend either to corrupt me or human society, and this high life which I wish to keep pure? Then, supposing pleasure is a settled thing, which you say cannot be got rid of out of life with safety, and which yet can hardly be kept in life with safety; suppose it is thus, like fire, which warms and scorches—like a two-edged sword cutting both ways,—what do you advise?

Then comes the point where the clergyman, whom the people are constantly coming into collision with on this subject, has to step forward and deliver a most difficult judgment. And it is not without some little malice and satisfaction that the honest inquirer sees his spiritual adviser brought practically to bay; but, indeed, the

tables may often fairly be turned upon the honest inquirer. There are numbers of people in this church who know fairly well what it is right for them to do. But they don't like to do it,—'Ay, there's the rub,'—and so when they have got something they want to do, which they know they ought not to do, they come to the clergyman and say, 'Do you think this is right?' and then the clergyman, or the moral teacher, is put in this dilemma. If he says, 'Yes, this is perfectly right in itself,' the man who knows it is perfectly wrong for him goes and does it, and blames the parson. Or, if the clergyman says, 'No, it is not right,' the man turns his back upon him, and says, 'Oh! here is a straight-laced set of people; they deny you the most ordinary enjoyments of life. They won't let you smoke, and they won't let you drink, and they won't let you dance, and they won't let you gamble; and you must not go here, and you must not go there, and you must not touch this, or taste this, or handle that; who can be guided by such a shallow set of formalists?' And yet, brethren, we are constantly, if we are to satisfy people,—we are constantly expected to decide and say, 'This thing is right,' and 'This thing is wrong.' What are we to do under these circumstances?

134. Some people, for instance, want to know whether going to balls is right, or whether going to theatres is right. Then they come to the clergyman, and perhaps, he thinks they are not right, and he says, 'No; these things are wrong.' Then he gets a little sect about him,

and this little sect says, 'It is wrong;' and they never go to balls or theatres. They don't give up the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eye and pride of life, for all that. The devil is shut out of the front door, but he gets in at the window; the religious tea table is often as bad as the stage, and a good deal more offensive, because it imports the element of hypocrisy into the proceedings. Observe, I am not saying that the religious tea table is always as bad as the stage, or that the stage is always bad; please to notice exactly what I say, and don't go off and unintentionally misrepresent me to all my evangelical friends.

But on this question of balls, what will you do? On this question of theatres, and all such things where there are social elements of good, and where there are also elements of corruption—what are we to do? what are we to say? Are we to say that they must be abolished? Because into this ball enters worldliness and slander, and many kinds of deceitfulness and lust, shall we therefore declare that all people who go to balls are bad, or are likely to get bad? We know that is not the case; if people are going to get bad they get bad, and they don't commonly keep good by being kept out of the ball-room, though I dare say some people get no good in the ball-room. Now shall we decide that all ball-rooms are places only meet for the devil? I will tell you then what will be the result. You will make them places only meet for the devil. If you cannot find out how to use those assemblies, if you cannot find some way in which you can thus socially enjoy yourselves without corrupting yourselves, and if

you once say, 'We will be of the world, and against all the religious people,' and then if all the religious people pass a ban of exclusion upon you, why they will only be making you as far as they can what they tell you you are, and what they tell you you must be. And what is more, they will make themselves very like what you are, or what they suppose you to be; only they will be in the line of religious, instead of worldly dissipation. I should prefer the latter, it is more honest.

135. And now with regard to theatres. Brethren, I have been thinking of this subject, often, for many years, and I will tell you what I used to do myself at one time. I am exceedingly fond of dramatic representations, but I once thought it was wrong to go to theatres at all, so I did not go for a long time—for years. Then something of this kind occurred to me. Supposing all the people who say there are things to be amended in theatres stay away, are these things likely ever to be mended? Are they likely to get worse or better, if so-called religious people stay away? Why they are likely to get worse. Managers will be obliged to pander more and more to immoral tastes, when there are no moral people left in our theatres to please. When people refuse to sanction the legitimate drama, depend upon it the drama will get more and more illegitimate. Some one must pay, and if the moral people won't, the immoral people will.

But further, have I right to tell all the honourable actors and modest actresses all over the kingdom that

their profession is an essentially godless one? I know there are a great many actors who are trying to do their duty to God and man, and are anxious to get an honest living without the sacrifice of morality. I know there are some who are striving to conduct the stage in a right and proper manner, and make it a respectable and decent arena for taste and talent. Have I got a right to make their work difficult, almost impossible, by discouraging their art, and condemning the good and the bad together? Is the stage in itself so utterly abominable an institution, an irretrievably immoral vocation? When I remember how the stage first came into existence such an idea is naturally checked, for what do I find? I find that the stage emanated from the Church. That was the beginning of the stage in England at least, and many other countries, where it endeavoured to represent outwardly—to render through the dramatic instincts—the drama of the religious Life. So at the play at Oberammergau you have still a remnant of this ecclesiastical origin. You see the dramatic instinct employed in giving power and force to the life of Christ and His apostles. And the Miracle Plays of the early Church were similar applications of the drama. Out of this Church Drama arose the modern secular stage. And we should endeavour to judge it fairly by its capacities, by its promise, as well as by its actual performance.

Few people hold that Shakespeare is a degrader of modern society, although there are some things in Shakespeare which had much better not be read out

aloud, or in private either. We do not hear that Shakespeare is full of corrupting influences. If I go into religious families I find Shakespeare on the table. 'Oh!' you say, 'but all plays are not like Shakespeare's, and all actors are not respectable.' Well, these are truisms, and I admit there is a great deal that ought to be amended, both in the plays and the players. But do you think plays and players are likely to get better, if those who love good plays and good players resolve to stay away? Here is a man not incurably sick, but still he is not quite well, and we say, 'Where's the doctor?' 'Oh!' says the patient, 'the doctor's staying away till I get well, because he is afraid of compromising his character.' Well, brethren, a decent public is the only stage doctor worth anything, and as long as the decent public stay away, the drama will remain sick. 'Well, but are not good men out of sympathy with the doings of the stage and the actors?' Yes, with what is bad about them; but there is common ground, there ought to be common ground, on which the moralist and the player may meet; there should be no internecine war between the stage and the pulpit. Of all people in the world the clergyman ought to be able to meet all sorts of people on common ground: wherever he can acknowledge an honourable vocation, a legitimate instinct he ought to do so, and none the less because such vocations and instincts have got twisted; it is his business and interest to see them set right, not to crush them; and I look forward to the time when all the honourable developments of civilisation, and all the

sane instincts of human nature, shall take form in a healthy and a regenerated condition. He alone who does not despair of his fellow-creatures can have the courage to take things as they are, and be willing to work for their improvement and purification. I believe if many good people, instead of staying away from theatres, were to go to those plays—and there are surely some such—which they could witness without being scandalised or hurt, they would ultimately form a kind of public opinion of what ought and what ought not to be represented, and we should soon have a reformed stage. The remedy is to infuse a new spirit into old institutions, and not to sweep away old institutions. You cannot sweep them away. You cannot annihilate the ball-room and the stage, they are integral portions of our civilisation, probably of all civilisation. Do you mean to say that there is nothing wholesome and good about such things, nothing to which the moral and social sentiments may attach themselves to lift them up more entirely to what is wholesome and pure? Remember, you are not living in a pristine and simple, but in an advanced and complex state of society. You cannot always separate at once between the sheep and the goats; there is a good deal of the goat about some sheep I know, and a little of the sheep about several goats. You have to deal with mixed quantities. You cannot adopt the rough-and-ready method of pulling up the tares that grow amongst the wheat, you might injure the wheat. You must not be afraid to work in the field where both are growing; you must not turn your

back upon that field, you must not enter it to trample down the tares and the wheat together. It is much easier to isolate yourself, and to have nothing to do with a great many mixtures of good and evil like balls, like theatres, like—like—men and women. It saves trouble, it saves crosses, but it wins no crown.

136. Look here. Some people find fault with me, because they say, 'Oh! you know So-and-So; but don't you know he is a bad man, and you ought to have nothing to say to him?' or they say, 'Did we not see your name associated with that sinner's name, with that publican's plan? The object is good, no doubt; but then you know the characters of those people are not sound—they are no better than they should be.' But I say, brethren, suppose you begin to pick and choose in this way, will you have any effect or influence on society whatever, except a repellent influence? Supposing I ascend the platform with a man with whose religious or political opinions I don't agree at all, but we are bound together by some common object for good, then there we have a common ground. A bad man comes to me, and says: 'I have just been going over my estate, and I find that my poor people have been living in pigsties and hovels, and I have determined to alter that. I won't let it go on any longer. I don't profess to be a religious man. I don't profess to be better than I am; but I won't have the people living in this manner. I will build them decent houses. Now, will you help me? You are a clergyman. You ought to know about that

sort of thing. Will you tell me what kind of cottages I ought to build?' And suppose I were to turn my back on him, and say, 'Be off, you rascal, I won't have such a villain in my house. I know how you came out of that commercial transaction. I know what you have done, and what you are doing in your private life. I know all about your private character. You are an ungodly man. You never go to church. I believe you are a liar and a swindler; don't come near me.' No! I would not say that; but I would say, 'I will give you the result of my experience such as it is, I will help you in your good work.' I would not make an allusion to that man's bad life, but I would take him up by what was good in him, and I would draw him by that. Do I want to put my heel upon a man who is already down under the devil's hoof? Shall I take him by the throat and say, 'Down, down; you shall not rise, though you try to struggle upwards?' Brethren, there was One amongst us who went down amongst the publicans and harlots, there was One who sat at the tables of notorious swindlers—men who farmed the customs in a dishonest manner. Yet He ate with them, and sat down with unwashen hands and feet, and there were those who wondered that He kept such dissolute and abandoned company, and called him a gluttonous man and a wine-bibber. But He was the Saviour of the world, and the Bright and Morning Star!

137. My dear friends, if you have any wish to regenerate society you won't do it by absenting yourselves from every gathering of human beings, where there may be

something wrong going on, some alloy of vice. Why, do you suppose that in this church there have been no bad thoughts? Do you suppose there are no bad men and women here, whom Christ loves, whom Christ would have sat at meat with, who are hypocrites, who have sinned before they came to church, who have not been guiltless even within the walls of God's house, and who intend to go forth and sin more boldly and deliberately than they have ever sinned before? Do you think this is not the case? Then you know little enough of human nature. Do you suppose that I don't know that all the people here before me are not blameless and spotless? Yet when I come in and see you all sitting there filling your pews, and willing to be lectured in moral things by me, do you suppose it would be right for me to turn my back on you? would it be right for me, when I see this or that person come to sneer, to criticise, to sleep, or to stare, to say, 'I won't have anything to do with such an assembly'? That is not the way to win men, or to regenerate society.

So far I have stated somewhat fully my view of pleasure in reference to associations which are met together to enjoy themselves.

138. But you would have more details, you want to know about the race-courses, of which I know little, and my opinion may be worth little; but here it is. I believe there is a great deal of harm fundamentally in the race-course; but that which gives horse-races their civilised *locus standi* may be a good thing. Races are primarily

intended through competition to improve the breed of horses, and I don't think that is a wicked or a wrong thing, and if people go and take pleasure in seeing the result of these improvements, I don't think that is wrong; but, at the same time, I do think that of all the institutions in this country perhaps more wrong-doing is connected with the race-course than is connected with any other similar institution; and if you have no hope of being able to do anything towards the purification of the system of betting, cheating, dishonesty, lying, and debauchery that goes on during the races, I think that you had better keep away; and if you cannot import a little better element, if you don't see your way to sanctioning what is good, but only add by your presence to the influence of deplorable excesses; then, if this be so—if, in other words, an institution is so incurably corrupt as at present constituted, that nothing can mend it—it may be best to treat it at once from the ascetic point of view, and say, 'It cannot be cured as long as it exists under these conditions; it must be struck down and reconstituted before I go there.'

139. Then people come and ask about field sports, and there was a great controversy going on about field sports not long ago. It is not possible, in the few minutes that remain to me, to give any idea or outline of that controversy. I myself believe that some field sports are demoralising, and that others are not. That is my present opinion. I confess, after having read the correspondence that has taken place in the public prints on

this question, it did seem to me that some sports might be justified, whilst others should be abandoned by all humane and civilised persons. I think, for instance, that pigeon matches are not excusable on any manly or sportsmanlike grounds. It seems to me that whenever you leave out the element of fair play, you leave out all that makes sport manly. Whilst in such things as fox-hunting there is a fair field and no favour, in such things as pigeon matches or badger-baiting there is no fair field at all. You may say, 'I don't agree with you.' Very likely not. It is impossible for me to discuss such questions any further at the present time. But I will add this one remark. When I say I think pigeon matches are degrading, I don't think that necessarily all the people who indulge in this sport are bad men, or unkind men, or inhuman men. If I go back a few centuries I find some of the most Christian men, like Sir Thomas More, with sound hearts advocating bear-baiting and bull-baiting and a number of other sports most brutal and demoralising. Why did these men advocate them? They thought it was a harmless amusement. Why did they think that? Because they lived years back, when there was a lower tone of humanity. And when people indulge in badger-baiting and pigeon matches, I put them on a level with those who lived in bygone times. They are not up to the civilised mark of the nineteenth century, that is all; their heads are more to blame than their hearts, and in high circles this want of true culture is, I am sorry to say, very prevalent. Pigeon matches, prize fighting, and such things are indicative of low taste and untutored

capacities. With some illustrious exceptions, there is not enough real education amongst our upper classes, or we should not find them still yawning over sports that the middle classes have abandoned as brutal and undignified.

140. It is unfortunate for the culture and humanity of the upper classes that it should not be they who are the first to puf down what is brutalising in the manners and customs of the country. It is the middle classes who protest against these things, it is the upper classes who will not let them die out. But the time is coming when the aristocracy of this country will have something more important to think about than pigeon matches. It may be pleasant and well to ask what pigeons exist for? and to answer, 'For peers.' But another question, 'What do peers exist for?' is, at our present rate of progress, more likely to require some good answer. I am expressing no opinion on peers, but I affirm that class privilege will not always cover personal unworthiness—a high position entails high responsibilities, and it becomes a public scandal when these responsibilities are forgotten or neglected.

141. But, now to close. Brethren, when we get clear from details, what is at length the great principle which must guide us in our pleasure? It is almost impossible not to raise a number of questions upon every particular case, but my business is this, 'not to have dominion over your faith,' or over your opinions; not to lay down a law

upon this subject or that, but to suggest certain great and clear principles which you will have to work out for yourselves. Then in your pleasure, whether physically, intellectually, socially, or spiritually considered, what is or ought to be your guide? It is this. That not pleasure is the end of life, but that something else is. What is that something else? The end and object of your existence should be work, or the legitimate employment of all your faculties—work for God, work for man, work in the state of life in which it has pleased God to place you, for Him, for yourselves, for your fellow men. Follow this as a first principle, and you will find how wonderfully, how satisfyingly all pleasures will group themselves healthfully and helpfully about work. When you once make pleasure the whole end of your life, you will find it impossible to get it; you cannot get pleasure out of the pursuit of pleasure, and if you could, you could not reconcile it with those moral and spiritual principles which point you higher.

When I look to Jesus Christ, I find there hints in His life as much as in His words (although I find hints in His words) how we ought to enjoy ourselves.

First, I should say, Jesus Christ almost left pleasure out of His legislation. He did not talk much about it; He did not recommend the exclusion of it or the adoption of it in any way. I find Him saying, 'Be ye perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect.' I find Him saying, 'Be ye holy. Be ye pure in heart, and ye shall see God;' but I don't find many sentences about pleasure or enjoyment. Why was this? It was

because Jesus Christ was absorbed in a great life-work. 'Seek ye first the Kingdom of God;' the rest would be added; and when you become absorbed in a great life-work—professional work, social work, I care not what it is—when you become thus absorbed in the duties of your life, you will not be always thinking about pleasure, though it will come; when you get up in the morning, you will not say, 'How shall I please myself?' but you will say, 'What has God given me to do?' Jesus Christ worked, His Father worked, all good men work, every day a task there lies before you.

But now, in Christ's life, do you suppose there were no flowers springing up by the wayside? There were. There were quiet moments at Bethany, quiet moments in the olive garden often and often before the night of the bloody sweat; also when He walked by the way, or by the sea, enjoying social converse, and there were associations of happiness and of joy and of friendship about the quiet vineyards and hills of Galilee. Remember that His joy was our joy, His sorrow our sorrow. Jesus Christ chose to be found at the marriage supper of Cana as well as at the grave of Lazarus. He did not seek to check mirth, to crush pleasure; He came that we might have joy and have it more abundantly. Pleasure for Himself or for others was not the pursuit of His life, but His life-work radiated goodness, from whence came enjoyment and satisfaction, exhilaration, happiness; and the same will come to you.

And when pleasure comes, bring it to this test: 'Does

this pleasure interfere with my life-work, does it impede me? In dining do I take such a quantity of wine that it interferes with my work or damages my constitution? Do I so waste my nights, and so rise late that I go into the office irritable and cantankerous, because I have allowed my body to get into an irritable and nervous state?' Then that pleasure is wrong. You must curtail it, and bring it within bounds. Or ask again, 'Does my pleasure lower me in my own eyes, does it degrade and lower others, is it a snare to weaker brethren, are they sacrificed to me who am strong? "I have a work to do, how am I straitened till it be accomplished!" But my God is not unrighteous, He will reward me with "good measure pressed down."' The promise is to you and to your children, 'Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all things shall be added to you.'

But the man who follows pleasure as the whole object of his life is of all men most miserable; he is a beggar; he goes about spiritually in pauper rags; he is unsatisfied; he is insatiable. He says to pleasure, 'Give, give, give!' He says to the sense of taste, 'Give!' but the sense of taste does not give. He has ruined his sense of taste. He will never have any more enjoyment in eating and drinking. He says to his ear, 'Give!' but it is grown deaf, or it is dull; he cannot love the sweet music now, it is full of bitter memories, of vile memories; he will no longer hear 'the voice of singing men and singing women,' 'the whole head is faint, and the whole heart is sick.' The Cain's mark is on his brow, and joy will have

none of his company, and the world calls him a man of pleasure! Ah! it is a dreadful sight to see a man walking amongst the extinct volcanoes of dead lusts and passions. No flowers upon the mountain, no sign of vegetation. As he wanders to and fro upon the parched and sulphurous soil, seeking rest and finding none, he suddenly gazes down into some new crater of living corruption, his foot stumbles upon the dark mountains, and he has passed.

But he who holds his life-work before him, walks out every morning a new creature, and as the fresh air comes upon his face, he thanks God for the gracious gift. Simple are the pleasures of the good man; simple, but deep and blessed, are the enjoyments of the man who has never voluntarily corrupted himself, who has kept his heart virgin for God, his love unspoiled, his sensibilities pure. What richness of pleasure is his, what spotless 'feasts of charity,' what glorious hours with love and friendship! The skies bow down to him, and the earth is lifted up, he rejoices in the work which his Father has given him to do; and when he has drunk the cup of sorrow, he rises up strong to suffer as he has been strong to enjoy, 'as sorrowful and yet always rejoicing.' And now his hour is come too, but his feet have not 'stumbled upon the dark mountains,' he stands upon the morning hills, ready to yield his body to the dust, his soul to God; and as, bewildered with the light, his eyes begin to fail and his brain to swim, a voice is in his ears, 'Seek ye first the Kingdom of God, and His righteousness.' 'Lord!' he cries with faltering

breath, 'Lord, as long as I had any power, I tried to do my work. I tried to seek the Kingdom of God and Thy righteousness.' Then shall the blessed voice reply, 'The pleasures that are at the right hand of God for evermore shall be added unto you.'

Thirteenth Discourse.

ON SACRIFICE.

DELIVERED FEBRUARY 11, 1872.

ON Sunday last I endeavoured to clear the way, both for you and myself, to the proper understanding of what I called the 'doctrine of pleasure.' I tried to show you that God did not intend us to be the less happy because we were Christians; but that on the contrary he intended us to enjoy pleasure in mind, pleasure in body, and pleasure in spirit. I also tried to lay down what appeared to me to be the limits within which such pleasure was lawful. I showed you how impossible it was to solve the mystery of our nature by attempting to crush out of it its own wholesome instincts; we saw how asceticism had been tried and had failed; that asceticism might be a good exception to a law, but when sought to be set up as a law itself, it was a bad law. There are but two justifications for the ascetic's view of life and its duties; the one founded upon the corrupt state of the community in

general, and the other upon the corrupt state of the individual. If society be so eaten up, so riddled through and through, with vice and uncleanness, that all its recreations and amusements are inevitably tainted with the foul elements of contagion, then we may perhaps be justified in withdrawing ourselves for a season from the pernicious influences of such a wicked world. But modern society, bad though it may be in some respects, is not reduced to such a state as that; and although all the amusements and recreations of mankind probably contain some element which may be developed into mischief by the wickedly inclined, still it does not therefore become an act either of reason or duty to shut ourselves up and turn our backs upon

> The world, with all its lights and shadows,
> All the wealth and all the woe!

The other ground for asceticism is the corruptness of the individual. There are many men about in the world who now enjoy the reputation of being very good men, but who in the early part of their career have led most abandoned lives. They have subsequently, however, been what is called 'converted;' and so hot is the zeal arising out of their new conversion that they look with horror upon every act of their past lives, and go up and down crying indiscriminately in the market-place, without distinction between things wholesome and things unwholesome, 'Unclean, unclean!' You will treat the ministrations of individuals such as these with all due reverence, but at the same time you will make allowance for the circumstances under which they

address themselves to your notice. There are, however, some, and it is within the bounds of possibility that there may be some even in this congregation, who cannot resist particular temptations. There are men, for instance, who cannot refrain from drinking what is *not* good for them, or from drinking too much of what *is* good for them. In their case it is of course best that they should be kept away from all fermented liquors, and from everything else that they cannot use without abusing it. But special failures afford inadequate grounds for laying down an ascetic law for all society.

143. I know that the obvious answer to some part of what I said last Sunday is, that it is utterly unnecessary to tell people they may go and enjoy themselves, because they are all prone enough to do that without being told. To this, however, I take leave to remark, that it is precisely because human nature is prone to seek its own enjoyment that it is important to point out the right grounds for so doing, and to set forth the proper limits within which the enjoying tendency of our nature may be indulged. It is just because you are always more ready to lay hold of that which promises pleasure than to lay hold of that which leads to pain, that therefore you settle all the more clearly in your own minds what kind of pleasure is lawful and what is not. It is quite as mischievous for a man to do right things believing them to be wrong, as it is to do wrong things believing them to be right.

144. I assume that you have grasped what I endeavoured last Sunday to lay down as the Doctrine of Pleasure; and I now proceed to another topic, which I have entitled 'The Doctrine of Sacrifice.' It is sacrifice which balances pleasure in connection with your work, and with all the duties you owe to your fellow man. The great doctrine of sacrifice it is that arrests a man when he is rushing on in his career of gratification, and says to him firmly, 'Thus far shalt thou go,' but, by a higher law than that of pleasure, 'no farther.' The great law of sacrifice runs through the whole of creation; it is the law upon which the world itself reposes; it is the law without which no human society could hold together; it is the law, I had almost said, without which no animal life, or animal functions, could go on for more than a very limited period of time.

We shrink from sacrifice and we are drawn towards it. It is at once so difficult and so consolatory; so entirely opposed to our dear self-indulgence, and so inseparably connected with all our highest sympathies; so nearly connected with the central figure of our religion; so intimately interwoven into the highest theory and practice of Christian ethics, that we must return to it again and again. We must question it; we must not let it go until it has given us a blessing; we must wrestle with it in our hearts and in our spirits, aye, and like Jacob, with our very bodies—I say, we must wrestle with the doctrine of sacrifice until the day breaks and the shadows flee away. This veiled though angelic

doctrine may be nameless and dark on one side, but it is bright upon the other.

Have you ever looked intently upon the moon when it has not been full? Have you seen a part shining brightly whilst the rest was shrouded and almost quite dark, and between the two there was a sharp line of demarcation, and the moon was bright where it caught the reflection of the sun but dark on the other side?

So it is with many spiritual truths which are perplexing and difficult. So it is with this great doctrine of sacrifice, simple or vicarious sacrifice, voluntary or involuntary. I say one side is dark—miserably dark, we can hardly realise at times how dark; but the other side is full of glory, light, warmth, and heat—all that we want, all that we agonise for, all that the practical life aspires to as its consummation.

Let us begin with the dark side and work up towards the bright side of the Doctrine of Sacrifice. Let us try and master it all round.

Very dreadful is it to think of—this suffering which has always been in the world; this constant death and sacrifice in a thousand shapes. Look back, for instance, long before the advent of man to this earth; look back and see those mighty lizards tearing each other to pieces in the slimy mud and primeval marshes of the early world. We know that they did so because we find these creatures inside each other's skeletons; we know that they must have lived upon each other, must have destroyed and devoured each other. We dig up their remains every day. There they are in the fossil state;

you can see them any day at the British Museum. Dreadful witnesses to this fearful and dark law of sacrifice—vicarious sacrifice; one creature sacrificed to keep another alive. And around us at this hour the same spectacle is going on; we see the poor feeble animal falling a prey to the stronger one. Insects devour each other; the mouse is pounced upon by the hawk; the stronger or the more wily fishes, birds, reptiles, devour the others—cannot live without them; the lion devours the antelope; the tiger leaps upon the ox; the vulture swoops down upon the lamb; and man?—why man feeds upon animals. In this last high stage of organisation there is still sacrifice in its lowest form, its most cruel and mysterious form. Nothing but the constant habit of eating creatures, nothing but the common habit of seeing them dead and slain for our food could reconcile us to what is in itself so strange and purely savage as this taking the life of beasts for food, this constant infliction of involuntary suffering and sacrifice. Yet it must be so; the slaughter is strictly in every sense an act of self-preservation.

But not only does man prey upon the lower animals, but he preys upon his fellow-men. I am not alluding to cannibalism now, although there are savage tribes who even thus prey upon each other; but I am speaking in a larger sense of the way in which human beings are not only sacrificed to the lies, and cowardice, and graspingness, and deceitfulness, and lust of others, but to the wants and necessities of others. You and I every day unconsciously have a share in this. We cannot help it;

the law of sacrifice is so intimately interwoven with our civilisation, with all civilisation. We are so constituted in the body politic that we cannot help other people suffering for us, and dying for us.

Look at this great city of London, look at Birmingham, Manchester, Liverpool, everywhere you see this dark law working. We habitually draw a veil over it; we do not like to look misery in the face. But sometimes we must get glimpses of it. It may not be amiss to glance behind the veil. Observe then, my brethren, how many unwholesome trades there are. Men go into them knowing that they will fall victims to their trade, yet they are obliged to do it—they are pushed to it by the requirements of their fellow-creatures, or by the burden that is laid upon them to get their living in some way or other. The acrobat is constantly sacrificed to the pleasure of thoughtless multitudes. The glass-blower knows that his days are numbered. Whilst civilisation endures we shall probably live by his suffering and death; and there are some musical wind instruments which demand a certain use of the lungs, which invariably tends to consumption. There are thousands in this great city who are sitting making garments, embroidering and sewing with a double thread 'at once a shroud and a shirt:' we reap the benefit of it; it is work done for the community; work that is undersold and underlet, undersold at the price of the life-breath—cheap life-breath—of suffering human beings. There are lace-makers who, to make their lace, are obliged to work almost in darkness, and who always go blind. There

are men who spend their lives underground on their backs in the depths of coal-mines, cutting out the coal, and covered, always covered, with filth and surrounded with pestilent vapours. We cannot wholly prevent all this. It seems part of a sort of law that works darkly. We may mitigate or stop it here and there; we may step in between the sufferer and his suffering and alleviate it here and there, and as civilisation goes on we are able to do this more and more; but at the same time we do not get rid of the law of sacrifice, which is one woven into the fabric of our pursuits, our pleasures, our progress, and our civilisation.

145. Well, that is dark enough. All these people are involuntarily sufferers by what looks like a blind, pitiless law which they cannot control, which they do not acquiesce in, from which they merely suffer. But suddenly the scene shifts; there is voluntary sacrifice as well as involuntary sacrifice. And the instant sacrifice becomes voluntary, light begins to dawn; the dark law becomes irradiated; we may not even then see very far, but we see a little way. Tell me, you who think that the doctrine of vicarious suffering is a doctrine without sense and without reason, without moral dignity or rightness, what do you make of all that high impulse which is in the world, which is in your own hearts, all that great willingness to suffer and to sacrifice yourselves for others? Tell me, brethren, how it is that human society holds together at all? Is it not because the good are willing to suffer for the bad? Because they

bear in their bodies, for the sake of the unthankful and the evil, the marks of the Lord Jesus; because every high, and pure, and regenerating influence which is now upon earth, or ever has been in the world, has been under the law of vicarious suffering and sacrifice, by which the good come and stand between the bad, and prevent them from bearing the full punishment or consequences of their sins.[1]

146. Look once more at this city. What do you mean by all these social, charitable, philanthropical institutions —workhouses, schools, reformatories. What do you mean by these hospitals? Who keeps them up? Who pays for them? The vicious, the spendthrift, the licentious, the selfish? No; these are set up by the good and the wise for the benefit of the evil and the ignorant. They represent the sufferings of the rich for the poor, and of the virtuous for the vicious. So the good man pays for the bad man, for 'the taxgatherer of the community is the vice of the community;' and if you could sweep away the vices of the land, you would get rid of half the taxes. You would not want half so many hospitals, you would not want the police, you would not want the prisons, you would not want the workhouses or reformatories, and, if other countries were likeminded, you would not want a large standing army and navy. The good are now employed in mending the mischief, and trying to prevent more; but if all were good, new ranges of progress would be immediately opened up; the energies

[1] Ward Beecher.

of the men would flow towards the sublime realisation of a new heaven and a new earth, instead of incessantly trying to stem the corruption that makes the fabric of society rotten. Well, then, at present the good man has to come forward and pay in money or bodily labour, or wisdom, or experience, for the errors of the bad. He has to pay his money for the losses of the spendthrift; he has with his wisdom to pay for the folly of the fool; with his truthfulness he pays for the lying of the liar; he has to pay for the theft of the man who is a robber, and for the mistakes of the inexperienced. And that is how the world goes on. If you take away the vicarious sacrifice of the good, if you remove those amongst us who stand between the sinner and his sin, who stand between the sinner's work and the evil which follows that work, I say you take away all that holds human society together, and the world is turned into a chaos, in comparison with which the struggles of antediluvian reptiles become manifestations of sweetness and light.

147. But when I behold the good man voluntarily bearing the sins and carrying the sorrows of the bad, how changed has the idea of suffering become! Sacrifice is beginning to grow bright. The great orb is slowly drawing round to the light. How noble is the sacrifice of patriotism! It is written on the page of history, how when great ministers have seen the evils of their country, and have had the wisdom to remedy those evils, they have been despised and rejected, or hampered, in the execution of their noble designs, yet have manfully

struggled through, and have not despaired of their country. They have laid down their money, and their time, and their wisdom, and their pleasure, and their life in this world, for the sake of carrying out some great reform ; and they have achieved this through the sufferings of their own bodies, and minds, and spirits. It is most pertinent to the present time to look back, for instance, only so far as the reign of Queen Elizabeth, and see how her great ministers saved us and saved our country through the sacrifice of themselves. I know nothing more tragic in its way than Mr. Froude's account of men like Cecil Lord Burleigh, and Walsingham, those patriots who saved Elizabeth and created England. Even now the patience, the disappointments, the fidelity of Burleigh stand out as grand sacrifices made for his country. Ingratitude, injustice, abuse, and treachery were his rewards. As for Walsingham, he was a still more complete martyr. After having saved the life of his queen and the honour of his country more than once, he died a ruined beggar, unjustly branded with a public disgrace. And time would fail me to tell of the Admirals who won the Armada, of Sir John Hawkins, of Lord Howard, of Drake, with a host of ragged sailors without rations, without pay, without clothing, fighting, conquering, suffering for the queen amidst what indignities and neglects! Crews mowed down by famine, dysentery, fatigue, and hardships of all kinds ; yet holding out, uncomplaining, full of enthusiasm. From the highest to the lowest in England's hour of need there was voluntary, there was vicarious sacrifice ; and

how beautiful, how sublime was the spectacle! Let us remember that, my brethren, and take heart when we hear that England has no courage, no patriotism left. We are indeed a peace-loving people; we are no doubt a money-getting and a selfish people; and we have our great national sins. But let no man say that when the hour comes we shall not be prepared to suffer for the right once more. You look at men in a time of peace and say what they will be in a time of war. But you cannot judge so; wait till a cry goes through the land; wait for the foul injustice, and oppression and great wrong; wait for the helpless thousands to be saved; wait for the captives to be set free; and when the time comes for a struggle—which God avert—the strength, the enthusiasm, the sacrifice of England, and England's sons will not be wanting. It has been so in the past, and it will be so in the future. Bright, bright is the sword of liberty, bright is the shield of patriotism, and the sacrifice of those who give themselves for their country, is it not glorious?

148. But if patriotism makes sacrifice beautiful, so does love; but is it not love in every form which ennobles sacrifice, whether love of country (which is patriotism), or love of children, love of father, husband, wife, or friends? Once more, then, behold vicarious suffering made bright through love. Is it strange to you that love should stand between the sinner and the consequences of his sin? You say when you hear that 'Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners;' you say

when you hear that 'He bore the sins of the whole world,' and that 'by His stripes we are healed,' that that is a strange and unjust transaction. But you do not think so when similar conduct is viewed by the light of love in your family circle. Many of you have children, dear children, and those you love most are perhaps the most restless, the most obstinate, and cause you most trouble and anxiety in the present and for the future. Well, what would you not do for those children? How would you not suffer for them? And you do this because they are so dear to you, because you cannot suffer enough for them. You would stand between them and a bad world; you would keep them true, and happy, and pure, 'ere the sorrow comes with years,' would you not? And you will spend money for this, you will deny yourself, there is nothing you will not do to save the child, to spare the child—you will give yourself for him.* You take your brains and use them in the place of the child's brains, and you think for him—you take your experience and you act for him, and that is vicarious; and your money and pay for him; and when he is rash and impatient, you put your patience in the place of the child's patience; you fill up the measure of his deficiency with your long-suffering, and thought, and expenditure, and that is vicarious sacrifice. When he lies to you, you sit down and try to make him see the beauty of truth; and when he disobeys you, you forgive him again and again. It pains you when you see there are bad tendencies in the child which ought to be removed and rooted out. You sit up at night when he is ill, and you suffer with his pain, and you weep for

him, and you bear his burdens, and carry his sorrows, and you 'agonise' for him.

There is one sick-bed around which the thoughts of all England have circled during the last few days.[1] Some of the details of that scene we have been enabled to realise from the descriptions of family life in that household which have been laid before the country. A widowed mother is there suffering in her anxiety at the bedside of her eldest son; a loving and youthful wife suffers and watches, well nigh exhausted, by the side of her stricken husband; other relations neglect everything else to come and take part in watching by that bed of sickness which all at one time feared was to be the bed of death. That was their sacrifice. 'Hard,' do you say? 'Cruel,' do you say? Do you think any of these watchers counted the hours they passed beside one whom they loved? No; another element was brought to bear upon that cruel law, and sacrifice became illumined by love.

Suppose one comes to you and tells you your house is on fire. You know your little one is in the house; you rush home; you do not stop at the door to ask what progress the fire has made; you bound up stairs heedless of consequences; scorched and burned, you still nerve yourself for the last struggle; you spring forward, and you rescue your child! But do you reckon that your sufferings have been hard? No; the sacrifice has been a labour of love.

Once more: you are at sea; the vessel is going down; there is only one boat lowered; do you not thrust from

[1] The Illness of the Prince of Wales in 1872.

you the desire of your eyes? the one who is more to you than father, mother, brother, or sister, or friend. Do you not compel that beloved one to pass into the boat which is taking the others to deliverance; and when there is no room found for you, do you not stand quietly upon the deck of your sinking vessel, and see the raging elements around you, and face death calmly, because you know one is safe who is dearer than life? Ah! at that moment is not the thought of going down into that great, angry, cruel, deep sea, is it not transfigured by the act of love and sacrifice by which another has been saved? But that is vicarious suffering, vicarious death!

And now take all these ideals of sacrifice, weld them into one harmonious whole, and raise them to the plane of the Divine, and we have none other than the character of God Himself as He stands related to man; as the God of sacrifice and the God of love!

149. Is this incredible? Is this extravagant or impossible to conceive? We have traced and tested the highest influence in the life of man, in the life of humanity, and we tell you that it has its seat in the bosom of God Himself; that such an influence has come forth and been incarnate in a Person; that such a one, called Jesus Christ, has presented God to man as love, man to God as sacrifice, being Himself love, and giving Himself as a sacrifice for the sins of the world.

Yes; I believe that in some inscrutable way this power of going forth and giving Himself for mankind, entering into their sorrows and trials, becoming as one

with them in order to bear their sorrows, belongs to God. We may not be able to put our thought into formularies; but it may be a living thought for all that. Creation is itself a kind of sacrifice, a coming forth of God, a giving of Himself to others, that they might have life, and have it more abundantly. The preservation of man, or the continuous outflow of life-power from God, is sacrifice; and still further, the constant uplifting through death of all things, the passing out of death into life, the repair and regeneration of that which stands ruined sometimes by disease, sometimes by sin, and always by a kind of subtle imperfection—this supplying of the imperfect out of the perfect is again sacrifice, and such a sacrifice, remember, means sympathy, means love; and that is what draws the heart near to the unseen Spirit, through the manifestation of Jesus, because, 'as He was, so are we in this present world.' And whenever that form of personal, human sympathy rises before us, the thought of sacrifice is forced upon us. We speak of grieving the Holy Spirit of God, appealing to a sympathetic side of God's nature which is felt to be in intimate communion with ours, some God-like pulsation beating in time with the fevered pulses of a suffering humanity: so we say, 'He bears our burdens, and in all our afflictions He is afflicted,' and 'the Angel of His presence saves us.' Such words are, no doubt, relative terms, but they are near enough practically for the religious life, for they bring us to God, they tell us of One touched with the feeling of our infirmities, of One

who draws nigh unto us that we may draw nigh unto Him.

Now, in view of these remarks, I will close with a few observations.

1st. On Jesus Christ's sacrifice.

2nd. On our sacrifice.

150. First. Do not be superstitious. Do not think that the fact of pain is pleasing to God. That is one disastrous view of the Atonement, which has made Atonement in one sense of the word so unsatisfactory, because it has been represented that God took a certain delight in the actual pain and torment of the holy, righteous, and just One, which is impossible.

It is one thing to be pleased when you see a noble creature put himself between another and receive pain for him, it is another thing to take a holy, just, and righteous person and wreak the vengeance upon him which justly belongs not to him, but to the offender. Yet this is the way in which the Atonement has been sometimes brought before us. As if there were some kind of necessity for vengeance somewhere, as if it did not matter where it fell, so that if it fell upon the just, God was as well satisfied as if it had fallen upon the unjust. Why *we* are satisfied when we see the innocent suffering for the guilty, but not in the sense in which God has been represented as satisfied with Christ's sufferings. When a man who is a good man builds a reformatory, and deprives himself of his money, we are satisfied; we say he has taken upon himself to bear the sins of the

guilty; when one who loves another puts himself between that other and the consequences of his frailty, and takes the responsibility of actions which are not his own, and suffers because he loves his brother, his sister, we are satisfied; but it is not because a man has suffered so much pain, but because he has had that nobility of feeling to say to another, 'I will put myself in your place, I will undertake for you.' So it is with God. It is not that God arbitrarily smites the innocent for the guilty; but it is just this: there are certain moral laws in this world which are designed for the well-being of the world, which are best for a man to live under, which are absolutely necessary, which are not to be twisted, but which must be conformed to under penalty—natural, inevitable penalty; and those who do not understand, or will not understand and keep those laws, break them and suffer the consequences; then it is lawful for one who does understand and obey them to come to the help of the disobedient, and step in between them to save them from the consequences of their actions. Then you say, the deliverer is smitten by God. Why, of course he is smitten by God in this sense, that the law remains which God has made good everywhere for everybody. He obeys it willingly where the other has broken it; he comes into collision in the breach, and is smitten. God has not taken a knife and pierced him; God did not stretch him on the cross; God did not tear his flesh and torment his spirit; God did not slay him arbitrarily for another's sins. He has stepped in—that is all—stepped into the place of suffering, and suffered vicariously. That is just

what you do when you go amongst the vile and degraded, and the better you are the more you will suffer from the results of their unclean, and filthy, and wretched lives. It is just what the doctor does when he goes into a plague-smitten hospital and catches the plague, and he may then preach vicarious sacrifice to those plague-smitten ones; he may tell them, 'If you had been cleanly in your habits and obeyed the laws put before you, you need not have got this plague; but now you have got it, I have come here to try and alleviate your sufferings; I have cured some of you, others will get well, but I have been smitten down amongst you, and I shall die; I shall go home and see you no more, but I shall die happy, I have laid down my life for you, God has smitten me.' Certainly; but not in that sense in which He has been said to seize on an innocent though willing victim and punish him for the guilty, and then retire with a sort of glutted frenzy, or, as theologians say, 'satisfied justice.' Justice! what kind of justice would that be? 'Ah!' but we are told, 'you know this was a violent proceeding on the part of the Creator from our point of view, of course, but then the Creator's justice is of a different kind from ours!' I should think it was; of a very different kind indeed—so different a kind as to be called properly by the very opposite name. Tell me not God's justice is one thing and man's another; that God's love is one thing and man's another. If God's love is not the same as man's, then the word 'love' has no meaning as applied to God. Divine Justice is on an immensely larger scale, but it must be of the same description or character, dif-

ferent only in altitude and quantity, but not in quality; and if it is not of the same kind, then the word justice has no meaning at all, and it is of no use to talk any more about Divine love and justice. Tell me it is of the same kind as mine, but immeasurably beyond and above me, and I understand, but do not describe to me a horrible human crime and call it Divine Justice!

151. And now a word with reference to man's sacrifice. What fallacies lurk in the common notions about self-sacrifice! People think that by torturing their bodies they are doing some good to their souls and pleasing God. But be sure of this, the better you treat your body the more you honour its Maker. Therefore, the first great lesson to learn practically is, 'Do not sacrifice yourself for nothing, whatever you do; you have got little enough to give, you can give but little, make the best of it. Take care when you lay down so much money, as it were, at a sacrifice, that you get your worth for it. Do not sacrifice yourself for nothing.' One of the most tempting heresies of ancient or modern times, is one which is still to be found amongst our High-church friends, people who seem to hold that if they injure their vile bodies they are pleasing God, besides doing their own souls some good. And I dare say we shall have a good deal of this kind of piety during Lent. We shall have it proclaimed from certain pulpits, that all through Lent you must try and feel very hungry, and the more hungry you feel the more holy you will really be. You

will have it said, 'You must try and deny yourselves in a variety of ways, and the more unpleasant the denial is, the better you will become by it, and the better your fellow-creatures will be;' and it might also be added, 'the more unpleasant you will be to your fellow creatures.' I have known ladies go off to church at half-past seven or eight o'clock in the morning to early service, and leave their husbands to come down and get their breakfasts as best they can, and when they come home about nine o'clock they find their husbands just going off to business. Well, of course, coming back from her devotions the wife feels very pious, and meets her husband who probably feels very cross, in short, with him everything has gone wrong. His coffee was cold, his breakfast was late. He is going off to his day's work; he would have liked the society of his wife, he had some little things to say to her, or some arrangements to make. But then she was off to church in such a hurry, and when she comes back, she only looks at her ruffled husband as much as to say, 'Poor unredeemed man!' and off she goes to her room to pray for him! And no wonder the men hate the clergy and keep away from church.

152. My dear brethren, one important hint about sacrifice is just this. Do not as a rule make duties for yourselves. Do not make sacrifices for yourselves. 'What thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might.' What God gives you to do, do it. When God calls you to sacrifice yourselves, do it. Do you think you will have

to wait long? Is there anybody who has no duty marked out for him? If there is let him certainly find duties; but it must not be mere fancy work—whether it be fancy religious work or fancy worsted work, not fancy work; do not allow that sort of thing to interfere with home duties, or any other obvious work which God has given you to do.

The burdens we impose upon ourselves are not the real burdens, they are devices to get rid of the real ones. We choose burdens we wish to bear because we cannot bear to carry God's burdens. Here is a person who is called to some quiet and unobtrusive sphere, called to teach little children to be kind to an old grandmother, to read aloud to her. Here is one called to sit down and write for her father to dictation, or called to help her mother in the household work. But that is not in her line. What is in her line is to go off to early communion, or to read religious books, when she ought to be giving a music lesson. What is in her line is taking a little religious dissipation at a missionary meeting, or a prayer meeting, or something perfectly useful and justifiable in itself. I will not say a word against religious meetings, but they are something less than religious when they interfere with the work which God has given you to do. Do not you find that Jesus did the work that was clearly marked out for him to do, that the apostles did the work God gave them to do, although theirs was a special work, whilst yours may be ordinary? Everybody on earth, man, woman, or child, can find, if they will, something which is clearly marked

out for them, and which they have got to do; and then, with reference to many other things which may attract and be quite good for them on occasion, it is written, 'These ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.'

You may turn round and say, 'What has God given me to do in the way of sacrifice?' How do I know? I see some people here to whom God may have given a lady companion. How do you treat her? You know she has to remain with you, and she cannot easily get away; so you wreak all your ill temper upon her. Would you like to restrain your temper a little, by way of self-sacrifice? you would like to do no such thing; yet you take her regularly to your church, which, by the way, you know she abhors, and which is unto her as the house of Rimmon! Why it has passed into a byword, how ladies who have not much to do, and do not like to live alone, get some lady companion who is obliged to go where she can, in order to get a comfortable, or an uncomfortable, home. And is there no sacrifice on both sides to be made in that modest department? Is there nobody in your house who is in such a position? Let us say that the lady companion is your own wife. Is there no forbearance needful? No—none. She is your wife—you can treat her as you like. The little dog is treated much better—but then that's a dog, she's only a woman. Supposing the companion belongs to the male sex, say, he is your clerk; is there no necessity for a little forbearance there? The tongue is a fire; it is a very hot fire sometimes, when you come into the office late, and find

your clerks perfectly regular and up to time, whilst you are annoyed at your own waste of time, and your clerks have to pay for it.

153. Ah! my friends, if you want sacrifices look still nearer home, nearer than dependents, nearer than wife and children. Look into your hearts, consider your bad passions. There they are within you, all crying out, 'Quell me if you can.' Do you never think of sacrificing any of them? No. You think that you would soon give up the struggle, soon be prostrated, if you were to enter into a contest with your bad passions. And yet here you are looking about for imaginary work. You want to fight windmills when the thoughts of your hearts are unclean, when the words of your lips are vile, when your acts are acts that do not become Christian people, and would disgrace an infidel. It is not difficult to bear self-imposed, often imaginary, sacrifices; but it is very hard to deal with the real ones. How will you withstand the passions of the flesh and of the mind? How will you curb your unruly instincts? How are you to resist temptations to dishonest gain? How are you to bear with those who irritate you? How live sympathetically with those who are antipathetical to you? How sacrifice yourself for society? Suppose, for instance, that the law of the land, which binds a man and woman together for life, has neither compunction nor pity for them when it discovers they are altogether unsuited for each other; but, on the contrary, throws the greatest obstacles in the way of two

persons getting outside the influence of the intolerable temptations which their discordant life renders them constantly subject to; supposing that the law of the nation has provided no reasonable outlet or escape for them, what are they to do? Brethren, we all have to suffer from imperfect laws, more or less, and let us hope that misery is the exception and not the rule of married life. 'But then,' you will say, 'it is poor comfort to be the exception if the minority is not to be represented.' There are many subjects, however my brethren, upon which it is very difficult to come to any sound judgment or conclusion. We had better admit that. In the case I have just been suggesting, it may very often be found that the parties have only themselves to blame for their condition. They have not, in fact, begun to look into the law of sacrifice early enough. In how many cases of matrimonial dissatisfaction may we not say to the parties, 'If you had driven more carefully over the stones during the first six months of your married life, do you not think you would have had far fewer upsets afterwards? If you had had sufficient self-restraint and common sense to have borne and forborne with each other, you would never have found yourselves in the evil case of having a quarrel with the laws of society as at present constituted.'

But I judge no man. If a man so situated comes to me and says, 'I find my condition intolerable,' I can only reply, that he is his own master, and that by his own conduct he must stand or fall. If any man choose to set up his individual conscience against the conscience

of the nation and the laws of society, if he says to moral laws as applied to him, 'My burden is greater than I can bear,' he does so upon his own responsibility. It may be that he has a full justification in the eyes of God, though not in the eyes of men. If he be wrong, it will go against him in the great day when God makes up the number of His jewels.

154. In conclusion, dear friends, the motive power to do right must come upon you like the mightier one upon the strong man armed. Your hearts must be taken captive, your lusts and evil appetites slain, and the heavenly passions must enter in and subdue the weaker ones that are of the earth, earthy. You see constantly the bad motive expels the good motive, because the bad is the strongest. Try if the good motive may not be made strong enough to expel the bad one. You ask how? and I can but answer, The Spirit of God comes upon the man who prays, comes upon the man who seeks to do his Father's will, and be about his Father's business. It comes, brethren, as the wind comes, and as the light of the morning. It comes as the fire of patriotism, comes to make a man sacrifice even the nearest and the dearest, it comes as love comes, to make us insensible to our own private feelings, and willing to suffer for those whom we love. So are we inspired by God in our daily lives with a motive power which the world has not given and which the world cannot take away—an enthusiasm to do the right for Christ and His brethren, and to sanctify the Lord God in our bodies and in our spirits which are His.

VIII.

CONCLUSION.

GOD is revealed in the Law of Progress. Progress is described as a procession from the simple to the complex, from the homogeneous to the heterogeneous.

Progress is traced in the stages of Creation, in man, in human society, in history, in the evolution of the Christian Church. The irresistible nature of Progress is revealed in its steady triumph. Christ is declared to present the one Ideal of Life ever true to the cause of Progress. The Progress of the individual soul in Eternity is affirmed.

Fourteenth Discourse.

ON 'THE LAW OF PROGRESS.'

DELIVERED JUNE 11, 1871.

THERE never has been a time when there was such an intense anxiety to know something certain about God, and about His relations with man. Formerly these questions were settled by dogmatism, and by the assertions of so-called Revelation. The utterances which we still call revelation, contain indeed the germs of the most precious truths upon which the heart and intellect of man can feed, but insofar as the words of Revelation are dogmatic assertions put forward for you to believe, whether you can understand and appropriate them or not, insofar as they represent merely dogmatic as opposed to living truth, our age seems to have grown somewhat impatient with them, because man, constantly striving to make his religion, such as it is, bear upon his life, when he finds religious truth stated in such a manner as to obscure its connection with life and ordinary experience, then I say

a man is tempted to become either a shallow formularist or an infidel.

There are, I have no doubt, numbers here present, who are very much dissatisfied with many old forms of religious truth; but I believe there are few here present who would not be willing to believe in God, and willing, even eager, to believe in a certain communion with Him, if they could only discover any rational grounds for such a belief. People sometimes accuse me of sowing doubt broadcast; on the contrary, I sow belief broadcast. I acknowledge doubt; if I did not acknowledge it I could not root it up. It is of no use to go up and down the world and pretend not to see the weeds, yet this is what some religious people want us to do. Thoughts for the Times are not for them.

When the mind has once been thoroughly shaken in its simple reliance on traditional assertion, I see no way out of the difficulty but one; and that is, to take the facts of the world, to take the history of the world, to take the knowledge we have acquired about the world and human nature, and then to reason from these obvious standpoints to the Author of the world, and the relations which may subsist between that invisible and mysterious Author, Framer, Architect, Co-ordinator,—call Him what you will—and the intelligent beings by whom we are surrounded. St. Paul guides us to such a method when he says, 'the invisible things of Him from the creation are clearly seen'—that is, seen by the lowliest as well as by the most advanced intelligence—'the invisible things of Him, from the creation of the world,

are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made.' Thus we have an appeal from the visible universe to the mysterious invisible world, in order that we may get back again from the unseen to the seen, and grasp the hidden connection between this world and another.

156. Now I intend to speak to-day on 'The Law of Progress,' because it is in grasping this fact, that all things progress and develop, that we infer the beneficent nature of God, regarded as the intelligent source of order and progress.

If I could believe that, although God's ways are not our ways, and His thoughts are not our thoughts, nevertheless they are only dissimilar because they are so much more vast—not different in relations of thought and feeling, only immensely superior—then I should have no great difficulty in believing in a sympathy between God and man; or, in other words, in bringing intelligent and sympathetic man into contact with some boundless source of intelligence and sympathy. Supposing that I see around me principles of most profound intelligence, an intelligence not different in kind, but immensely superior in degree to my intelligence,—then I say God is the seat of that intelligence; and supposing I perceive that intelligence, unfolding itself in a certain order of progress, tends towards the improvement of the human race; that such development tends also towards the multiplication of the objects of this progress, that it increases the well-being and elevates the felicity of those who are the

subjects of it;—may I not say I have got one step nearer to a Beneficent Principle, and may I not, by observing this sublime law of progress, come to some conclusion as to the intelligence, the beneficence, and the love of God? I think it will be seen before the conclusion of this discourse, that no great stretch of imagination is required, in connection with the constitution of our nature, and with the impulses of man's heart, and the aspirations of his whole being, to believe that God sympathises with man, and watches over his development, and guides his progress towards the land of everlasting life.

157. I will ask you then to fix your minds upon the Law of Progress. What do we mean by progress? What is the Law of Progress? Lend me your close attention. It is *this* principle, that from one simple cause come many changes, and that from each one of those many changes many other changes proceed.[1] The Law of Progress is a procession from the simple to the complex; from what is homogeneous, *i.e.*, from what is of the same kind, to what is heterogeneous, or, to what is of a different kind; complexity coming out of simplicity, heterogeneity coming from what is homogeneous. That is the principle of the Law of Progress. I will give an illustration; first, of organic progress. I take a little seed. I cut it open and find it is all over very much alike, the same kind of pulp or matter—it is homogeneous. This seed is planted in the earth, when

[1] Herbert Spencer.

a change takes place in the seed a little germ comes forth. It is evident that there has been a differentiation or action of separation at work, and now the seed, but lately all one pulp, is seen no longer to be homogeneous, but heterogeneous. This seed grows, and so long as it grows it develops, let us say into the sap of the tree, the bark of the tree, the branches of the tree, the leaves of the tree, and the fruit of the tree; and so long as that goes on, this seed is progressing from the simple state to the complex state. That is the law of organic progress.

Now this law rules throughout the universe; and may I not infer the great, orderly and overwhelming intelligence of God, when I see one simple law like this running through the whole of the universe? It is my intention to-day to unfold to you in some further detail this thought, which I trust may make us sensible of the divinely active and intelligent beneficence of God, and give us a better hold over the principles of divine and human life.

I will now dwell upon (1) Progress, as it is seen in the stages of creation; (2) Progress, as it is seen in the fundamental developments of Human Nature; (3) Progress, as it is seen in the secular and religious aspects of society; (4) and Progress as it is seen in the individual developments of the human spirit.

158. Now try and carry your thoughts far back into the past, to a time when the whole of this universe which we see, these stars, these planets, this earth, formed

but one immense fiery mist. Astronomers tell us—and I believe the speculation is accepted by our best scientific men—that this universe was once nothing but a fiery homogeneous mass, or matter reduced to a state of vapour by intense heat. As time goes on this mass begins to cool, and as it cools, a motion, a rotatory motion is set up, and from that motion, the vapour condensing into solidifying masses, the planets are thrown off in rings; and thus, we have the planets, the sun being the centre of what is known as our solar system. This theory is called 'The nebula hypothesis.' Then, I say, in the first beginning of things, we find this law of progress —what is homogeneous, all of one kind, becoming complex; and so from this one fiery mist, we get the complexity of many worlds. That is one illustration of the law.

Let us now single out the earth. Go back to the world's beginning as described in the Book of Genesis. I am not likely to plead for the exact correspondence of the Bible, as a statement of scientific truth, with fact. I believe we may discover a great many important discrepancies in some parts of the Bible, between the Bible and Science; but for all that, I do not think sufficient justice has been done to the account given in Genesis, as unfolding practically the kind of order in which this world came to be developed.[1] Substantially what do we read? We read of the earth being 'without form and void;' a great mass of homogeneous pulp, or what-

[1] Mr. Capes has pointed this out in his *Reasons for Returning to the Church of England.*

ever you like to call it, 'without form and void;' in fact, very much the state in which science tells us that the world has certainly been at some remote time. Then the next thing we read is, that 'the Spirit of God *moved* upon the face of the waters.' Now the latest researches of science tell us that *motion* is the beginning of all progress, the source of all development. Then we find *light* and *heat* mentioned in connection with fertility and vegetation, differentiation of life, and we now know that *heat* and *light* are only modes of motion. I need not point out how the progress is traced up through the organisation of species, reptiles, fishes, birds, and beasts, culminating in man, and taking what are called so many days or ages, for we need not suppose ordinary days to be meant; just as when we speak of 'the present day,' we do not mean to-day, but the present age.

159. But at last we come to man. Again, modern science tells us that he was not the exalted creature who lived in a grand and perfect state, but that he was originally a naked savage. That was his first state. Nobody can read the first chapter of Genesis, without the glosses of Milton's 'Paradise Lost' and the delusive myths of popular teaching, without seeing that what is described there is not the ideal creature which we have put together out of our imagination and devout fancy, but an uncultivated savage, of low intelligence and feebler will, giving way to the first temptation that crossed his path, worshipping a fetish in the form of a serpent, such as the lowest savages worship to this day. Adam, as

a man, was very much the kind of being which Mr. Darwin and Mr. Herbert Spencer have described. I do not lay any particular stress upon this correspondence between the Bible and Science. I do not think that the Bible is a repository of Scientific Truth, its value is of another description; at the same time it is only fair, when we hear the Bible held up to ridicule by men of science, to point out that the practical and substantial order of progress indicated in Genesis, is, after all, not so very far wide of the mark. We read there an account of human nature, as we know it must originally have existed; and we have there an account, and a very detailed account, given, of a progression from the simple to the complex, roughly similar to what we now know must have taken place.

160. Then I come to human society, and I am able to trace the same law of progressive development at work. Look over the surface of the globe, and you will see Agriculturists, Shepherds, Commerce, States, and Nations, a state of things very complex.[1] How did all this come about? It came from a simple beginning. It was developed in accordance with the Law of Progress, by a differentiation taking place in the race. Men were first hunters. They spent their time in capturing and slaying animals for food—'Nimrod was a mighty hunter before the Lord,'—and in procuring furs and skins for clothing: 'the Lord God made coats of skins and clothed them.' Then followed the domestication of certain animals.

[1] See Mr. J. S. Mill's *Representative Government*, chap. i.

Men kept flocks and tended them. 'Jacob came into the land of the people of the east, and he looked, and behold a well in the field, and lo, there were three flocks of sheep lying by it, for out of the well they watered the flocks.' That was a higher and more complex state of society. Then they learned the arts of agriculture, because their flocks led them a wandering life in search of pasture, and so they began systematically to cultivate the ground. 'Seed time and harvest' became of importance to them, and we find such injunctions as, 'Thou shalt not sow thy vineyard with divers seeds.' This was a much more complex state of society. Next people congregated together in towns. In Deuteronomy we read of 'fenced cities,' as well as 'folds for sheep,' and from town life and country life we get commerce. 'Zebulon dwelt at the haven of the sea, and was a haven of ships,' and as early as Genesis xxxvii. 28, we read of 'the Midianitish merchantmen who passed by.' Life is growing more and more complex as time goes on, until we get the organisation of tribes into states, or whole bodies of people living in different parts of the world called Egyptians, Assyrians, Hebrews, all having spread and separated, apparently, from one centre, developing step by step under the law of Divine order, which is the Law of Progress.

161. When we have arrived at that point, what a grand, what a stupendous panorama, what a map of the world's history, opens before our eyes! Once get this wonderful human race so far advanced as to break up into

distinct nations, and you see the still more startling and definite action of an intelligent and beneficent principle at work. We have something very positive and simple to tell about the history of nations, and the more we know about their history the more we can see the marvellous intelligence that has presided over the development of the race, and the beneficence with which this has been conducted, through the Law of Progress, for the good of the world at large. I look abroad and see so many great names, Egypt, Chaldea, China, India, Persia, Greece, Rome. And what do these names stand for? In my mind, each one of them stands for some gigantic step in the progress of civilisation.

162.[1] Egypt speaks to us from the past, and impresses itself upon the mind even now—by those great pyramids which we still see rising amidst the sands of the desert, she gives us the conception of *material force*; that is the one thing which mastered the Egyptian mind more than anything else. Now, material force is an important element in every stage of the world's history and civilisation. But to the Egyptians was given the power of realising, of elaborating, and of being thrilled by this vast conception. To this day we wonder at the masses of masonry erected by them, and speculate upon the sort of mechanical agencies which they must have had at their disposal.

If I glance at India, I find something quite different. India is the *seat of intellectual speculation*, the *source of*

[1] See Professor Maurice's *Moral Philosophy*.

thought; and let me remind you that intellectual speculation has given many of the greatest and best things to the world. There is no important invention or discovery which does not owe much to the imagination and more to patient and deep thought.

In China I find the *source of regulating action*, and you all know the benefit of practical application. You know what a flimsy and hollow thing a sermon is, for instance, unless there is something to lay hold of, something practical, which helps us in the regulation of our lives.

To Persia belongs the perception of those mighty influences of *good* and *evil*, which in one form or another have fascinated and bewildered the world.

To Chaldea we must attribute the birth of astrology and astronomy.

When I come to Phœnicia I see that spirit of commerce and enterprise—a thing the value of which we appreciate in England above all places in the world; and we should look back with awe and reverence to those who first taught men to feel at home on what we call our native element, the sea, and made commerce the great work of a great national life.

Later on in the history of the world, we find Greece the *source of mind governing matter*; Greece, the father and the mother of the arts; Greece, to whom was given that intense perception of the loveliness of the human form, and of all the artistic capacities in man. To Greece belongs that, and from Greece comes that gift of seeing beauty to the whole world.

In Rome, we discover the world's legislator; Rome gave law to all the nations of the earth. The Justinian code of Roman Law lies at the root of half the European legislation of to-day. What a nation once does thoroughly she does for all Time.

Then there is a mysterious nation which I have not mentioned yet; I allude to that Semitic nation, that missionary race, that race to whom was given the power of keeping alive a consciousness of the spiritual in the midst of crushing material forces. The gift of the moral law and the grace of the spiritual life comes from the Jews. This nation, as I pointed out elsewhere, seems to have been brought in contact with all the great nations of the world, at the time when those nations had reached their highest degree of civilisation; and this strange and wonderful Semitic people, as we know, gave to those nations a moral law and a spiritual life, taking from them at the same time a good deal, but never losing their own individuality. And I cannot be unmoved when I remember that from this people came Jesus Christ, the Author of our religion—came Christianity, which was, as it were, the concentrated essence of all that was most highly spiritual in the world at that time,—came Christianity, which has watched over the development of the modern nations of Europe and America —Christianity, which has been most mighty, and planted itself with the tread of onward civilisation, and which is at this moment developing, and only kept back by the unwillingness of man to accept the new aspects of divine truth, and the determination of religious people

not to allow the free spirit of religion to incarnate itself in all the more modern forms of thought.

Brethren, standing thus between the Past and the Future, can I look back without a certain awe and conviction of Divine superintendence and purpose upon the development of the world? May I not say, there has been one and the same mighty spirit at work here, a spirit not only of intelligence, but a spirit of beneficence? We are the heirs of all the ages. We in our complex civilisation, in our superior skill of maintaining the health of the body and regulating man's social happiness and stamping out disease, in discovering the laws of the mind, in using the forces of nature, in lightening the burdens of life, in legislating for the welfare of society—we are living witnesses that the Law of Progress has been going on, creating many developments out of the most simple things, until all things tend to grow into a more grand and complex unity; and we are not at the end even now. As I look forward into the future, I can see a time when men will point back to this age, and call it the infancy of the world. The arcana of nature have still to be revealed, the supremacy of justice and love has still to be vindicated, the palm-branch of universal peace has still to blossom and to bear fruit, and give its leaves for the healing of the nations.

I will ask you to rest your minds by a short pause, before I proceed rapidly to survey the history of the Christian Church.

163. When Jesus Christ came, He founded an outward

and visible kingdom resting upon two great laws; one law was the *universal brotherhood of man*, not as a theory, for as a theory that universal brotherhood had been long known; but as an active principle, making everyone acknowledge that there was something common between man and his fellow-man, upon which a commonwealth of love might be founded. Another law was the *communion between God and man*, that dream which all religions have shadowed forth, and which Jesus Christ proclaimed with a voice of thunder, which has resounded through the ages and still rings in our ears. Jesus made men feel that it was possible to pray to God, that it was possible for God to pour Himself into the soul of man, that it was possible for the development of every individual to be carried on under the superintendence of a Divine love.

Upon these two great principles the Christian Church was founded, and as long as the Christian Church adhered to them it went on conquering and to conquer. As long as it accepted this law of love, moulding it about new social and political modes of life, as long as it could shape the future, by adopting and consecrating the Law of Progress, it continued to rule, and by ruling, to bless the world. The interest of man in men, and of God in all men, shown by deeds of love, and the irresistible power of a holy life, that, I make bold to say, is the heart and marrow of Christianity, as it is sketched lightly but firmly by the Master's own hand in the Sermon on the Mount; and that was, and ever must be, the only life, and heat, and radiance which the Christian Church ever had or ever can have.

The Apostles knew that and taught that, and the Church of the Fathers entered into their labours.

From A.D. 400 to A.D. 1208 the Christian Church was almost an unmixed blessing to humanity. It was not widely at variance with the intellectual state of the times, it was perhaps a little in advance of it. It was the conservator of literature, the patron of the arts, the friend of science, and the censor of morals. About 1208 the Church made up its mind that it was a great deal of trouble to go on with the age, and stood still. About 1208 the Inquisition was established at Rome and fixed dogmatic truth, thus erecting an immovable standard of belief and stopping progress; and all the strength, intellectual and spiritual, in the world has been struggling ever since with this dogmatic theology and these immovable forms.[1] Whether they be forms doctrinal or forms ceremonial, forms belonging to Rome or any other branch of the Christian Church, it matters little. It is the principle more than the thing which is deplorable. Immovable expressions of truth must yield to common sense and to matters of fact. We must accept the development of knowledge, we must admit that the free spirit of Christianity will appear and re-appear under different forms. We must not attempt to check human progress or obstruct modern civilisation, or silence the voice o modern science. We cannot do it. About 1208 science began to revive, began—I had almost said—to be founded. A little further on, in the following century, the conscience of man began to rebel against the forms of the Roman

[1] See Introductory Discourse 'On the Liberal Clergy.'

Church, until, at the time of the Protestant Reformation, the yoke of ecclesiasticism became altogether too heavy for our fathers to bear, and they cast it off. The times were fatal to the old theology, there was a great retrogression on the part of Rome, for the Roman Church could not see that the Divine Law of Progress was daily and hourly forcing religion into new forms. And as it was in those days so it is in ours. Even now the voice of science is ringing in our ears, which is none other than the voice of God, for it is the discovery of the laws of God; and even at this moment we are, as a religious people, timid and terrified like the startled hare of the forest. We are closing our ears to the new revelation, as the old world closed its ears to the revelation which God made by the mouth of Luther, and Zuingle, and Calvin.

164. But still, in spite of us, the majestic wave of progress moves on, submerging the worn-out beliefs and crumbling superstitions of the past. Strong and irresistible as the rolling tides of the sea come the new impulses, and we may not stay them. We deem them wild and lying spirits; they care not, they pass us by, they are full of holy scorn; they speak to their own and their own receive them, and we may go hence and mutter our threats, and tremble in the darkness and spiritual gloom of our empty churches; but outside our churches the bright light is shining, and the blessed winds of heaven are full of songs from the open gates of paradise, and men hear them and rejoice. How many are there,

religious people, who never go to church, who despise Christianity, because they have only known it in connection with the forms of a barren worship, who despise Christianity, and yet are living high Christian lives. Thus we begin to see that although man has tried to imprison this glorious and free spirit in his Creeds and Articles, yet he cannot do it. There is a Christian spirit—be it said to our shame—working outside the Christian Church, an unacknowledged and anathematised Christianity still going on its triumphant way, leaving us alone in our orthodox sepulchres with the bones and ashes of bigotry and formalism.

165. But whose is still the figure that inspires all that is best and wisest in modern philanthropy and modern faith?. The ideal form of the Christ still moves before us, and still we struggle after the for ever attainable yet unattained. His life doctrine of the universal brotherhood of man is still the latest cry. Have we not but just now (1871) had a hideous parody of it in the Communism of the late revolution in Paris? Do not our own legislators begin to feel that peace and good-will can only be established between workmen and masters, between rich and poor, between learned and ignorant, by caring for all alike, by rescuing class from the oppression of class and then binding all classes together by common interests as members of a sacred polity of justice and mercy? What is the most characteristic form of the religious spirit in the present age? If I look at the bright side I should say it is Philanthropy; and

where do we get this word 'Philanthropy'? Men used to care for themselves, their own family, their own society, and their own nation, but Jesus Christ revealed a moral tie and a spiritual communion which was superior even to the bond which bound together the members of one family. He told us that there were no bars between nations, that we were all of one blood, and one in the sight of God. Every philanthropic movement, every hospital that rises, every church erected in this great and populous city, has its roots deep down in the principle, announced by Jesus Christ, of the constraining love of our brother men. That philanthropy is the great principle upon which the Church of Jesus Christ is founded; we can say literally, with regard to all deeds of mercy, love, self-sacrifice, 'the love of Christ constraineth us.' This survives, the spirit of a divine life is still operative.

Christianity has survived many shocks. Let me once more remind you how many. It has survived the metaphysical speculations of the Alexandrine school and the subtleties of a mongrel Greek and Asian philosophy, —those speculations which were so true to their authors, and which are so unintelligible to us; it has survived the winking of saints, and the mediæval Mariolatry, and the handkerchiefs of St. Veronica, and all kinds of silly visions and foolish revelations; it has survived historical criticism, and it will survive what are called the attacks of modern science. It will go on still as it has gone on; you never can annihilate the principles upon which the Christian Church is founded. Reduced to their simplest

terms, stripped of casuistry, priestcraft, and superstition, they are seen to be the ultimate principles upon which human society depends for its happiness, I had almost said for its prolonged existence. Therefore, He who is Himself the incarnation of these principles, He who loved His fellow-man as never man loved another, He who spake as never man spake, He who was at one with God as man has never been since, He is still the Way, the Life, and the Truth to us; 'Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.'

166. And, lastly, I come to trace the Law of Progress in the development of the human soul. I need only ask you to contemplate yourselves, body and soul; our very complex bodies having various attributes, our mind various attributes, our spirit various and manifold aspirations, yet bound together in one communion. How has this come about? It has come in the order of nature: first, an unintelligent infant; then a self-conscious child; then a being with varied powers and fecund activities; and ever a higher unity has been reached, as beneath our eyes the simple has passed into the complex existence. You too are one with the same great law which reaches through all organic and inorganic beings, from the beginning of time until time shall be no more; it is your privilege, consciously and willingly, to become one with that Spirit who fills the universe with the breath of His life. But there is this difference; when we speak of the progress of society or of organic progress, we speak of an unconscious progress; but in individual progress

a man is, or may be, conscious of getting better or getting worse, his eyes are opened to see the good and the evil, he may ally himself with a power and a law which make for righteousness, or he may forbear, he may foster or blight his own progress.

Into what circle of Divine affinities art thou come, O my soul! to what principalities and powers, to what majesty and beneficence! Let God henceforward be thy friend, let the voice be heard that is even now whispering in thy ears, 'This is the way, walk ye therein, when thou turnest to the right hand and when thou turnest to the left.' 'The Spirit and the Bride say, Come,' the Master Himself is calling you to go up higher out of the dregs of your own carnality. He makes you sit down with Him in heavenly places, He enlightens your mind; you no longer see men as trees walking; you no more see through a glass darkly, you put away childish things; and rapt from the fickle and the frail you enter daily more and more into the joy of your Lord!

167. And now, my brethren, to conclude; the Law of Progress carries us on the wings of the spirit beyond the grave and gate of death and the barriers of things seen and temporal. When you have once realised the intelligence of God lifting up your intelligence, and His beneficence calling out your aspirations, and keeping your love alive under unfavourable circumstances, can you ever lose the dream of an eternal life? Can you ever give up the Immortality of the Soul, and the individual conscious-

ness of man after death? If you feel, although you have not got hold of God, He has got hold of you; do you think He will ever let you go? Shall any one pluck you out of His hand? Is there any question when the disintegration of the body takes place, and terminates the present mode of your existence, as to the permanence of *you* in your own individuality? I know you will point to the countless millions who have gone down to the dust, to the tribes of savages who seem never to have been the subject of any progress at all, to 'the backwaters of civilisation,' or again to the thousands of promising and gifted men who have been cut off in the flower of their age. Do you suppose that with the superior intelligence we have seen to exist, and with the traces of a beneficence such as we may deem does exist—do you think that all these really have ceased to be? and that they have been called into life, been neglected or cared for, as the case may be; have withered here, or developed power and sublime consciousness of an infinite beyond, simply to be extinguished in the foulest corruption?

When the heart rises in prayer to God, there is an end of all such doubts, only the evil in the heart and in the world comes in and sweeps away the good influences; but when the good influences come back, you rise again out of the mists of doubt and disconsolation, because your mind has been taken possession of, and you can say, breathing that divine air, 'Lord, I am surrounded by an atmosphere of love, though it be also one of mystery; I cannot see clearly through the dim

telescope of the soul, those worlds on worlds that are beyond. Yet now thou art with me—close beside me—encompassing me with a love most personal; in that love let me live and move and have being, content to be led like a child, not knowing whither I may go, yet content—able to say with the sublime indifference of the apostle, "It doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when He shall appear we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is." And "Every man that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself even as He is pure."'

IN MEMORIAM.

FREDERICK DENISON MAURICE.

In Memoriam.

FREDERICK DENISON MAURICE.

DELIVERED APRIL 7, 1872.

TO THOSE who knew and loved the late Frederick Denison Maurice, it will not seem strange that I should take this opportunity of saying a few words upon his life and teaching. How could I do otherwise? All that I know of theology, all that I ever felt to be true about religion, I owe to Mr. Maurice; and although I know too well that my lips are unworthy to be the interpreters of his thoughts, yet I could hardly bring myself to speak to you upon any other subject this morning.

To many of you, my brethren, Mr. Maurice's face is familiar, we can scarcely believe that he is dead. A few days ago I met him in the street, I never saw him again. His voice is still ringing in our ears; and you know who have frequented his ministry—and there are many members of his congregation here present to-day—you know how the winged words came with a thrilling power

and emphasis through his voice—a voice upon which his very soul seemed to float out, and find a home in human spirits tossed with care and doubt; you know how thoughts, which would have fallen from other lips dead and unsympathetic, came so burning and so full of prophecy from his, that perhaps for the first time in your lives you felt that many well-worn sentences were no mere platitudes, but full of abiding and consolatory truth.

Mr. Maurice was, for some later years of his life, Incumbent of Vere Street Chapel, not far from this Church. It was my privilege long before Mr. Maurice came to Vere Street, to know him in that kind of way in which so many young men knew him, and to love him in that kind of way in which so many young men loved him; and although during the last years of his life I saw less of him, I could not help feeling inspired by the thought that he was not far off from me every Sunday, and I have thought sometimes when I have spoken words which perhaps he might have spoken, so nearly were they a reflection of his own mind, that I owe more to Mr. Maurice, not only as a man, but as a thinker and a theologian, than to anybody else in the world.

I remember, when I first became the incumbent of this church six years ago, expressing my great anxiety about being able to fill the church, especially as at that time I was in very feeble health. 'The sense of your own weakness,' said Mr. Maurice, 'is the best strength you could take with you to your new sphere;

perhaps, if you were more confident, you would not be likely to succeed so well.' I went one Sunday afternoon to his church, he was preaching a sermon to children. It was so simple, yet so impressive, and good for grown-up people, that I earnestly pressed him to preach it at my church, but he declined. He preached afterwards an extemporary sermon here, one Sunday evening, which some of you may remember, on 'The Doubt of Thomas.' The only other occasion on which Mr. Maurice entered this church was one Sunday morning about twelve o'clock; he came in when I was preaching on the Bible, taking for my text, 'The letter killeth, it is the Spirit that giveth life;' a text which in one sense contains in itself the whole of Mr. Maurice's theology.

Mr. Maurice never drew a very large congregation at Vere Street Chapel. There were numbers of nonentities all around him who drew crowded congregations, and who will continue to draw them. Yet those to whom Mr. Maurice spoke were in reality more multitudinous than if his congregation had been of another kind, and five times as numerous, for the words which came from him fell into their hearts, were taken in by them and lived out by them, and taught by them to others. Oh, dear friends, if the few who listen would go forth and preach by works as well as words, we should not be so eager about the popularity of preachers, the numbers in a congregation. If we could but show the truth to others in such a way that the world might be raised up, we might be content to sink ourselves and our doings in obscurity, and rejoice that the excellency of the glory

was of God and not of us. And indeed, that was ever Mr. Maurice's feeling. His humility was very great and very genuine. It was no disappointment to him to think that numbers beneath him in intellect and holiness drew large congregations whilst he had a comparatively small one, for he was comforted by the thought that many to whom he spoke treasured up his words and carried them abroad. Like all teachers he was as the sower, who went forth to sow his seed, and some fell by the wayside. Perhaps there are those here who never knew the greatness of the man. Some left his church because they could not understand him. No blame attaches to them for that, because a man's mind may be so constituted that he cannot take in a high level of teaching when he can accept and assimilate a lower one. Yet some of the seed fell on good ground, and this is the most remarkable result of Mr. Maurice's teaching, that other clergymen who differed from him widely, helped to disseminate his influence throughout the land; his influence,—nay, let me say *himself*. They carried abroad, sometimes without knowing it, seeds which he had implanted in them. There is nothing more noteworthy than the subtle influence which he thus exercised. High and Low clergy, men of all parties and sects, taught and are teaching Mauricianism, some of them without ever hearing him or reading a word of his writings. The High Church clergy, who at first sight we might suppose to be most alien to liberal opinions, were often most deeply infected by them. I have been struck on going into some very

High church, to hear a sermon full of the living and breathing thoughts of Mr. Maurice; and then again, I have been to Dissenting chapels, and heard doctrine full of the soul of Mr. Maurice; and then I have been to a Unitarian Church (Mr. Maurice was a Unitarian in his youth), and I have perceived how the pure Theism had gathered a certain warmth, and kindled up into feeling the glowing sense of God's Humanity in Christ, so vividly seized by Mr. Maurice.

And now, dear brethren, he being dead, yet speaketh. He gathered a larger assembly about his grave than he had ever gathered at any one time about his pulpit. There went forth a voice from his coffin, and called out of the depths of this great city the representatives of many sects and parties; and hundreds who had known him in the flesh, and who perhaps, Sunday after Sunday, when they had had the opportunity of going to his church, had seldom gone near him, flocked to his burial, because they felt that there lay one dead whose influence living had been more to them than that of other teachers; and so with many tears they stood round his grave, and paid him the last tribute of their love. Many of you were there. You saw men of science, politics, literature, wealth and rank, Dissenters, Unitarians, working men, poor women, middle-class women, many of the upper classes, all gathered together, a motley crowd, men and women, old, young, and middle-aged. The sight was impressive, and yielded subject-matter for thought as well as feeling.

But it will be well now if, in speaking to a miscellaneous

congregation, I address myself for a time to the outward world. I do not forget that many of you who may have come here to-day may not have known Mr. Maurice; perhaps you may know, and at present care little enough about his influence. Therefore it will not be out of place to ask, 'What was it that gave Mr. Maurice this great hold over so many different classes of men? Why was he such a power as we are told that he was, and some of us know that he was?' I believe the answer will be in some measure this:—'That unconsciously to himself he had laid hold of two of the most stirring impulses of our age; first, THE LOVE OF TRUTH, and secondly, THE ENTHUSIASM FOR RELIGION.'

There are many people who love truth and think little about religion. There are scientific men who do not care for any established forms of religion, who despair of religion partly on account of the established forms. And there are others who love religion, but are comparatively indifferent to truth—scientific truth at any rate—they are afraid of science and philosophy; there seems to them something antipathetic between science and religion; and so the great champions of the Love of Truth, and the champions for the Love of Religion, too often stand in opposite camps, glaring furiously at each other. Mr. Maurice was not only one of those who made the world better, but wiser. In him there centred these two things, an earnest love of truth, and an earnest devotion to religion.

He never could understand putting aside a particle of the truth for the purpose of convenience or interest;

and he never could understand suppressing conscience for convenience or interest. He believed firmly in a reconciliation between knowledge and a wise faith, although these sometimes appeared to men's minds in antagonism. He never could persuade himself that what God had permitted to be true in one part of the universe could ever really be in opposition to any other kind of truth. Thus, if scientific facts were ranged by man against spiritual facts, it was owing to a partial state of knowledge, or to man's downright ignorance. 'Yea, let God be true and every man a liar,' but let not man forget, that geology was God's truth just as much as theology, however partial man's knowledge of one or the other might happen to be. I think this is perhaps the grand *morale* of all his theological teaching; that however dark the world may be, however insoluble the problems it presents, yet the principles of historical criticism, or of scientific discovery, and the principles of religion, can never destroy each other or be destroyed, because the passion for truth and the passion for religion both correspond to the deepest thoughts and feelings of human beings, are both necessities, as of fire and air to man, and are involved in the very nature of his constitution.

Truth and religion must in every age be harmonised. Mr. Maurice harmonised them in some measure for his age and for himself. He did not pretend to harmonise them for everybody, but he did for himself. He did not ask you always to enter into his views, but he taught men to grasp principles and say, 'These are

fundamental, God intended man to discover truth and to be truthful, and He intended man to know religion and to practise it. These are Principles.'

Before we can understand Mr. Maurice's position, it will be necessary for us to go back some years in the present century. Born into the current of the nineteenth century, he took in its various influences and absorbed them one after another. He was early enough to catch something of the glow of the evangelical movement of the last century, which had not yet entirely faded. He lived long enough to see the transcendental, though ephemeral, revival of the evangelical movement in the preaching of Edward Irving. Between these two poles, the pole of the old evangelical movement of Wesley, and the pole of the new evangelical movement under Irving, was comprehended all the vital force of that great wave which swept over England and renewed through dissent the religious life of the people in countless country parishes and populous cities. He felt the power of this movement most deeply. He was, at the commencement of his career, a Unitarian, a believer in the one God, not a believer in any special revelation made to man by Jesus Christ apart from those other revelations made to man by other great teachers. However, Evangelicalism seemed to overtake him with the pulses of its failing activity, and sinking into his soul gave it the vital element which it required. What was the power of evangelicalism? It was this, was it not? Men said they had a personal knowledge of God. Men said that their hearts and consciences were stirred by

the Spirit. Men said when they did wrong their consciences rose up and told them so. They said that by communion and prayer they had real experimental converse with the Spirit of God. That He came to them, nevertheless, with the sympathy of a man, and drew them with the cords of a man; and Mr. Maurice never ceased to proclaim this heart and centre of the evangelical teaching to the end of his life. He told men that they had a Father in heaven in sympathy with them, and that a Spirit came forth from the Father and the Son to convince the world of judgment, of righteousness, and of sin. And he would always tell the Low Churchman who came expecting strange doctrine, 'Let no man deprive you of your faith, hold fast your belief in this personal stirring of the Spirit, in the supremacy of conscience, in this Conversion and inward Experience of God, make it more your own than ever, believe in its profound reality!'

But Mr. Maurice lived long enough to see those old watchwords of the Low Church party, Conversion, Experience, Conviction of Sin, etc., pass into mere rhetoric; he lived long enough to hear this preaching about conscience and the inner life from the lips of those who had never felt the power of conscience and knew nothing of the inner life, and who repeated the old evangelical watchwords without having learned the secret of their power; he lived to see the confusion that arose from the incessant unreasoning and morbid importation of the personal element into every phase of the religious life. Men said that it was right to do this and that, though sometimes what they did was wrong, because they

acted under the guidance of the Spirit of God; and so the floodgates of the wildest fanaticism and credulity were thrown open by the followers of the sober and godly leaders of the old evangelical school of Wesley and Simeon. What we have since learned to call Individualism ran riot.

Then arose the great High Church movement, the movement which said, 'You must not rest upon these individual experiences. You must look for spiritual life outside the human spirit, to the divine organisation of Christ's Church, the guardian of sacred truth and sacramental grace.' The 'I believe in the Holy Catholic Church' seemed for a moment to have superseded 'I believe in the Holy Ghost.' And when that message came, Mr. Maurice caught it up most eagerly. I recollect saying to him one day, 'How are we to know? we feel religious one day, and do not feel religious another. We think the Spirit is teaching us that this is true, and that is true; but how are we to know what is true?' Mr. Maurice said, 'As long as you rely upon yourself, you must always be in this state of uncertainty; as long as you put your experiences, and your feelings, and thinkings about God for God Himself, you must be in endless confusion. God is greater than any thoughts of yours about Him.'

It was this feeling of the external testimony to God carried on from age to age by an external Church, in spite of individual infidelity, delusion, faintheartedness, and vacillation, which supplied the necessary corrective to the abuses and fanaticisms of personal religion. The Church

was a witness for a divine order in the midst of human confusion; all its ordinances meant this; they recalled man to health, and helped him to shake off his mental diseases and morbid fancies. The outward Church was thus greater than its own forms—it was the symbol of a universal conscience, superimposed upon the individual conscience, compelling the individual to a higher wisdom, and correcting his partialities and deficiencies. But the Church was not to supersede personal religion, it was to foster it and develop it; it was to control it and to regulate it.

No doubt Ecclesiasticism, as impressed on the Church of Rome and on the High Church movement, gives a presentation of Divine order, which is too often but a mere parody of that order. But even then it is a witness that there *is* an order, although it may fail to represent that order truly. Mr. Maurice received in its highest sense the spiritual Life of the Low Church, and the spiritual Order of the High, yet he was not properly eclectic; for eclecticism means a system of fragments without any natural cohesion; but Mr. Maurice always maintained that life and order were inseparably bound up together in any healthy form of religion, neither was to be sacrificed to the other; both together were comprehended in a higher union, in the union of the Spirit and the bond of peace.

Out of this process of thought and feeling came what some people called the Broad Church. I shall never forget how grieved Mr. Maurice was when that phrase first came up. 'Broad Church,' I believe, was first

applied to Mr. Maurice's teaching, because Low Church men would go and hear from his lips the truth of the individual conscience, and the High Church would go and hear him maintain the divineness of ecclesiastical order; the Unitarian would go and hear him say there was but one God, unchangeable and eternal; and the Trinitarians would listen to a doctrine of a Divine Sonship and a Spirit proceeding from the Father and the Son. Everyone would thus go away and say that he had heard Mr. Maurice speak in his own tongue; and so the popular mind, with its peculiarly rapid and off-hand emphasis, called him a Broad Churchman. There was one more sect then: we had the Low Church and the High Church, and now we have the Broad Church. This thought very nearly broke Mr. Maurice's heart. It was the great grief and torment of his old age. He said, 'What! here have I been protesting all my life against sects, that they ought not to exist, that the members of Christ's Church ought to be bound together, whilst they have been separating themselves; and now [redacted]ut up my name and say I am a Broad Churchman, and the results of my life and teaching have been to make one sect the more.' I recollect once when the ill-omened word escaped my lips, I was unfortunate enough to say to him, 'Oh, but you know the Broad Church hold thus.' I saw the flash of indignation in his eye. The word slipped out hastily, because, after all, we must call people by some names, if they are bound together by a certain likeness of opinion, and I have never seen the venomousness of saying High Church, Low Church, and

Broad Church, to indicate different phases of religious thought; but it was inexpressibly painful to Mr. Maurice; yet, when he saw how distressed I was at having said it, he smiled one of those strange, sweet, unearthly smiles of his, and said, 'What do you mean by the Broad Church? I do not know of any Broad Church, only that which comprehends what you call the Low Church and the High Church, and all the Churches of Christ.'

Mr. Maurice carried this principle of comprehension further, beyond the sects around us, throughout the religions of the world, and that I take to be the most original part of his intellectual teaching. He was the first amongst modern theologians to hold before us, with a prophetic grasp, not a God of the Jews, or the Catholics, of High Church or Low Church, but a God of humanity.

Before his time it was common to regard heathenism as only another name for damnation. The light had been the exclusive property once of the Jews, now of the Christians, and all other ages and nations were without any real light or religion at all. But Mr. Maurice showed us in all religions the same spiritual core. When he spoke of the religions of the world, he meant the religious sentiment which had always been in process of development, struggling upwards in humanity. Jupiter, Apollo, Venus, Pluto, the Pythoness, Eastern divinities, and Greek and Roman divinities and all priesthoods, were so many attempts of the human spirit to express under the limitations of thought what baffles thought, and yet is the subject of a universal consciousness. Then his Christology,

or theory of Christianity, was exceedingly simple. The human had been taken up into the divine, and so redeemed from weakness, humanity in the fulness of time had been once expressed in what may be called divine terms; He who had been from eternity ideally its Head, incarnated at one point of time His conception of human nature—we beheld His glory—we beheld the elder Brother of all men, the divine Head of our race; the thought of God was revealed, and became the subject of human history. We take Jesus Christ and place Him upon the throne of humanity, and crown Him, not with thorns, but with the eternal diadem of God's conquering love. There henceforth He must reign, until He has subdued all things under Him. But although Mr. Maurice held that the full revelation of God had been made in Christ, he did not doubt for one moment that God had been dealing with other people besides the Jews before Christ, and with others besides the Christians after Christ; for was He not the Father of spirits and the God of the living? all spiritual teachings, all higher strivings were the teachings and the strivings of His Spirit with man's; He would gather them together into one flock under one Shepherd; they might not know it, they might not desire it, but His will would be done, and all the earth would have to keep silence before Him.

I think that he was the first amongst our recent Church of England teachers who bound us up into a divine polity all together, and refused to separate England from France, Europe from the Old World, the Old

World from America, Christians from Jews, Jews from Greeks, Turks, Infidels, or heretics. And depend upon it, the Church of England will never quite lose this Maurician impress, it has already infected every school of theology throughout the land. And this was the teaching which made him not only a great theologian but a great philosopher. Some people want to know what his system of philosophy was. He would tell you, 'I have no philosophy; I have no system;' and yet he wrote for us 'The History of Moral Philosophy.' I am not going into any subtleties; I will merely say that Mr. Maurice's philosophy was as simple as his Christianity, but I think it was essentially sound, and in accordance with modern methods—one in spirit with all the best philosophy of our day. He took the facts which were before him; just as the physical philosopher takes the physical facts and says, 'These facts obey certain laws;' so Mr. Maurice, coming into the moral world, and seeing that certain feelings about God and certain relations between men have grown up, do exist, are facts, reasoned from these to the nature of Duty, Conscience, God. He said that moral and spiritual experiences were as good facts as any others, that they had a right to be acknowledged by anyone pretending to treat of human nature and man's whole constitution, that from a contemplation of them we got hold of eternal principles, just as Mr. Darwin, Professor Owen, or Professor Huxley would deal with physical facts, and reason from those facts to the divine and eternal principles which underlie them; so, reasoning from what is seen to what is not seen,

looking back and saying, 'Known conditions being constant, this must have been so;' looking forward and saying, 'Known conditions being constant, this will happen on this wise;' so the moral philosopher can look back and can look forward, and declare the action of moral law and of spiritual tendencies in the past and in the future. This is hardly an abstruse or irrational system of philosophy.

The physical philosopher might tell us, 'Water is sure to evaporate at a certain temperature; that power in water we may call the eternal law of water, it has indeed little to do with time, although it is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever: it is a quality inherent in the water.' Mr. Maurice would tell you, 'Your conscience is capable of development; is capable of appreciating different temperatures of right and wrong; is capable of taking in laws of action; that is a quality inherent in the human conscience; it is nothing much to do with time, but is simply a quality.' So he would take that faculty in man and reason from it. You may differ sometimes about what right and wrong is, but all nations, civilised and uncultivated, acknowledge a right and wrong, the multitude know it; in addressing you at this moment, when I say 'right' and 'wrong,' you all know generally what I mean. Throughout the civilised world, wherever the heart and brain have received any culture, the words 'right' and 'wrong' correspond roughly to the same ideas and emotions. That there is in man a conscience, developing in the direction of right and wrong, is an eternal principle, an inherent quality in man. That was one great proposition of Mr. Maurice's

philosophy. And out of this grows the real explanation of his much-talked-of doctrine of eternal punishment.

Some people think that Mr. Maurice meant that we were to have the judgment of God mitigated to us in the next world, so that we were not to go on suffering for ever and ever. Yes and no. Will punishment be mitigated? No. Shall we be spared endless torment? Yes. But on what conditions? On the condition of a change in us. God never condemns to endless degradation; Divine principles do not alter, they are the same yesterday, to-day, for ever!

Understand the sense in which Mr. Maurice used the word 'eternal.' He used it in the sense of a permanent quality, not an indefinite quantity of life. When I say it is the eternal property of water to evaporate at a certain temperature, I am not speaking of water in connection with time long or short. Supposing water ceased out of the universe, I should still speak of it in the same way, and say that evaporation was the eternal property of water, although there no longer existed water, for I should not be alluding to water as going on or ceasing in time, I should merely be describing one of its properties whilst it existed.

Now, the rising of God's wrath against sin is an eternal property or quality of God. His judgment or punishment rests eternally upon what is evil, and upon man so long as he is given up to evil, in this world and in the next. It is futile to talk of God's letting a man off. He could not without violating His own moral constitution. It is a pity that Mr. Maurice ever acknowledged

the word 'everlasting,'—which it is difficult to dissociate from time,—as at all synonymous with 'eternal,' which is unrelated to time. If wherever the word 'eternal' and 'everlasting,' as translations of *αἰώνιος*, occur in the New Testament, we substitute 'divine' or 'spiritual,' we shall get the true significance of those passages which speak of the 'everlasting' fire, the 'eternal' life, and the 'eternal' death; we shall then see that a 'state' is being described, not a duration of a 'state.' Nowhere is it said, or can it be said, that a state which is and always must be under God's eternal condemnation, is to be the permanent state of any man; he may be in it to-day and delivered out of it to-morrow. Now people do not see that, because they do not understand the inexorable nature of moral law. Mr. Maurice never said that bad men would be let off, or that their punishment would be made soft; but he did say that God might save them *from* their sins; he never said He would save them *in* their sins.

God cannot change; therefore, so long as you are in opposition to Him, you will be tormented by the fire that is not quenched, by the worm that dies not. You do not feel conscious of all this now, you say; perhaps not; but you will all of you feel sooner or later the degradation and the misery of sin. *That* is a question of time. Sooner or later you will feel misery and own to torment, although you go on now gaily; but the longer you go on gaily, the more surely will come the time when the almighty wrath of God will be felt by you in your soul and in your body. The moral teaching of Mr. Maurice about

eternal or spiritual punishment was just this :—that man is not going to be let off. The popular notion about him was, that he was a soft-hearted clergyman who could not bear to think that anyone was going to be much punished ; but Mr. Maurice said, a man or woman would be punished. The poison of evil might take some time, but it would work itself out in plague-spots of misery. And people called that immoral, and said, 'Oh, then the bad can have a good time of it here, and go through a little purgatory by-and-bye and come off all right at last;' but he who saw purgatory and hell around him begun in this world knew better. Immoral! Which is most moral, I should like to ask, which is most in accordance with justice and common sense, to say that God intends to torment in burning, material fire the bodies of the great majority of the human race for ever and ever, whilst he is going after death to let some off scot free, or to say that God is going to punish everybody? God will not let off a man one jot or one tittle ; if you sin you will have to pay the penalty in the degradation and misery of your soul and body, and that will go on for ever if you go on rebelling against God for ever and ever. Is it best to say, some will be punished more than they deserve, and others will not be punished at all? Or to say, everyone will be punished as much as he deserves to be punished, and his punishment will always be self-inflicted, *i.e.*, the consequence of his own sin?

Such was the teaching which was called immoral by persons who kept repeating like parrots, 'One offence

against eternal laws deserves endless punishment ;' they might as well say, the man who once gets drunk deserves to have an endless headache. No, he does not ; he deserves to have a headache the next morning.

With reference to the possibility of anyone going on in endless torments for sin, Mr. Maurice would say :— I dare not, when I look at the frightful depravity of some men, I dare not say that their resistance to God will have any limit at all ; but do you not believe that God's love is more powerful than man's opposition ? We know that man will be tormented as long as he is in opposition, but life in the next world will be a continual revelation to the human spirit, of man's state to himself, of God's will towards and power over him. But if I cannot set any limits to the depravity of man, how can you ask me to set any limits to the power of a love which wills all men to be saved, and which I am told is to subdue all things to itself?

I dwell, dear friends, in conclusion, upon only two characteristics of Mr. Maurice. I think they are two which should sink into our hearts. The first was, his Christ-like aspect towards sin, his hatred of sin, combined with an inexpressible tenderness towards the sinner. This was the quality which drew so many different kinds of men towards him. Ah! we have many teachers, but we have not many fathers like him ; whilst the Ritualists were investing inexperienced striplings with sham ecclesiastical functions of confession, he who, in his intense humility assumed nothing for himself, who, like Paul, called himself the chief of sinners, was being a

true confessor to hundreds of weary and sinful hearts. Men of all shades of opinion and of every degree came to him for comfort and advice, and I suppose he heard more confessions than any other clergyman in London.

There was something inexpressibly comforting in his look of spiritual buoyancy and triumph, which convinced you that though you might be burdened with heavy and great trials and temptations all was right, and you would yet be able to shake them off. Poor creatures seeking counsel one after another would come to him, and there would be something in his sympathy, in his incapacity to be wearied, in his genuine, irrepressible interest, in his smile, something so reassuring in his way of saying that he had gone through it all himself. He believed in the state of darkness, because of the darkness of his own spirit, for Mr. Maurice said that his spirit was full of the worst infidelities, and that he could thus claim kindred by inward experience with the worst of human kind. 'Are you not weary of men?' I said to him one day. 'If I come to you at any time you lay down your pen or your book, and you let me waste your time, and you who never rest seem to have endless leisure to listen to others and to help them.' 'They teach me more than I teach them,' he answered; and indeed it was this immense teachableness which made him so great and wise a man.

And so he drew men's load of care from them and helped them to bear their burdens, and many who came to him desponding, and crushed, and heartless, went from him full of hope and new courage. I

remember saying to him one day, 'How are we to know when we have got hold of God, because sometimes we seem to have got a real hold upon Him, whilst at others we can realise nothing?' He looked at me with those eyes which so often seemed to be looking into an eternity beyond, whilst he said in his deep and tremulously earnest voice, 'You have not got hold of God, but He has got hold of you.' I shall never forget it. It came like a revelation to me that we were changeable, that we could not measure Him by our feelings, because we were so full of vacillation, fancies, and inconsistencies; but that He was the Changeless One, who had got hold of man and would never let him go. That has been a strange comfort to me in all my intellectual difficulties, in all my moral and spiritual wanderings; the thought that this great Father has got hold of us His children, that in His pitiful and pitiless love He will put us into eternal fire, plunge us into hell after hell, until we have got hold of Him and cling to Him to be delivered from ourselves, our selfishness, and our sin.

The other point on which I shall briefly dwell is, Mr. Maurice's capacity for work. He came down from dreams into a work-a-day world; his mind was naturally metaphysical; but he tore himself from all mere subtleties, he was never a schoolman, but one thing seemed to be his desire, to take the cup of trial, persecution, and suffering, and to do the work his Father had given him to do; and he had much suffering, much domestic sorrow, in the death or pain of those whom he loved; much mental trial and some physical trial;

but he laboured incessantly, and his work constantly seemed to reinvigorate him. He was a man amongst men, and he did whatever his hand found to do with his might. He never got any ecclesiastical rank, but he was greater without it. The Church of England, which owed him so much, was at one time not unwilling to brand him and cast him out, and there was even an attempt made to get up a childish agitation in Marylebone on his appointment to Vere Street Chapel. The present Bishop of London (1871) conferred upon himself the distinction of appointing Mr. Maurice to the Preachership at Whitehall, and when he died, he had held for some years the chair of Moral Philosophy at Cambridge. At the same time he was the incumbent of a church at Cambridge. He had formerly been chaplain at Lincoln's Inn, a Professor at King's College and Boyle Lecturer, and he continued to the last, Principal of the Working Men's College.

He never was anything like a rich man, yet few suspected his great and lavish generosity; but his hatred of imposition was such, that once when we were driving together, he insisted upon stopping the cab and getting out rather than being overcharged sixpence. 'I won't be imposed upon,' he said, in his nervous but determined way, 'I hate it.' Yet he has more than once during his necessary absence from town referred people to me who had traded vilely upon his eager benevolence, with a request that I would investigate their cases, and distribute money for him. The discovery of unworth was to him intense pain, yet he never seemed to lose his indomitable faith in human goodness.

In the midst of all his social and philanthropical work, he remained to the end an intense and indefatigable student; he dictated much; he spoke much; he read and wrote immensely. The works by which he will be best remembered are probably the 'Kingdom of Christ,' 'Theological Essays,' 'Sermons on the Lord's Prayer,' and the 'Moral Philosophy.' But there was not a phase of theological controversy during the past fifty years upon which Mr. Maurice did not manage to have his say. People complained of the obscurity of his books, as they complained of the obscurity of his sermons, but the man himself interpreted both. You could not always tell what he had been talking about, each sentence was clear, the page was hard to grasp, intellectual coherency seemed to be at times lost, but there remained something better, a spirit that seized, a power that moulded. It was the reiteration of something to him intensely real. He might be said 'to sing to one clear harp in divers tones,' and the refrain seemed ever this, 'You have not laid hold of God, He has laid hold of you.'

So labouring and so loving, he drew to his most peaceful close; and many of us here present saw him laid to rest, not in Westminster Abbey, as so many wished, but in his own family vault. And now that we shall never see him again we can only remember how kind he was, how tender, and true-hearted, and helpful to all who were drifted across his path. Was there ever a man so patient, so indulgent to the foolish, the arrogant, the bigoted, and sinful; so ready to spend himself and be spent for others who were weak, to work for them, to help

them, to suffer with them, to wrestle with them in prayer, by sympathy, by his great unconscious, personal goodness? There is no one like him left that I know of; his death is our immense and irreparable loss. There are some here to whom he was so much, so dear, so great, that they stand even now looking upwards like Elisha, when he cried after his master, 'My father, the horsemen of Israel and the chariots thereof.' To me indeed he is the last of the prophets. And his last words were most prophetical. As he was in his life so he was in his death, mighty in his power to bring home the influence of a Divine Spirit to the human heart, which is a much higher way of prophesying than merely by foretelling events. For some time he had been talking incoherently, and no one could tell what his lips were striving to utter; but almost with his parting breath he became quite lucid and distinct, and they who bent over him heard that he was saying the closing words of the Communion Service—words which always seemed to mean so much more to him than to others: He began with '. . . THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE LOVE OF GOD, AND OF HIS SON JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD, AND THE BLESSING OF GOD ALMIGHTY, THE FATHER, THE SON, AND THE HOLY GHOST, BE AMONGST YOU;' and then, with a great effort, correcting himself, 'BE AMONGST *us*, AND REMAIN WITH *us* ALL. AMEN.'

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